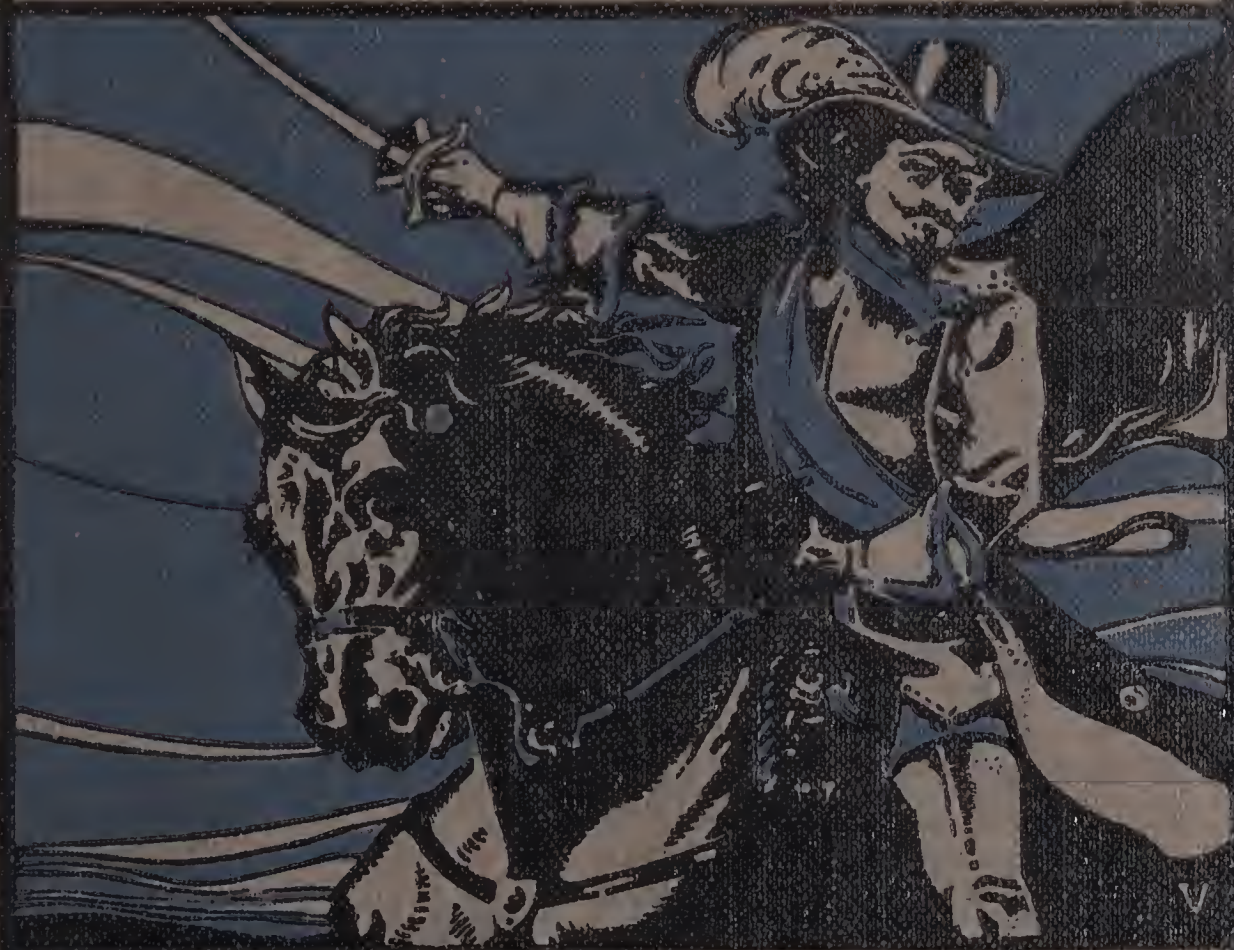
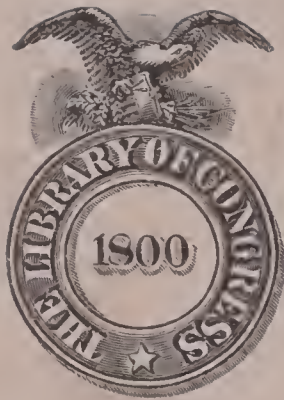


HEROES OF CONQUEST AND EMPIRE UNDERWOOD



EVERYCHILD'S SERIES



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HEROES OF CONQUEST AND EMPIRE



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EVERYCHILD'S SERIES

HEROES OF CONQUEST AND EMPIRE

BY

ETTA M. UNDERWOOD



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no 1.

TO
MY FATHER AND MOTHER

DEAR YOUNG LEADERS :

Whenever girls and boys work and play together, some of them are sure to be leaders. One may be a leader in a game, in thinking of helpful acts, or in making lessons worth while. How may we know which leaders are good ones? How may a leader know when he is doing right? Perhaps this book will help you in learning to choose good leaders, for it tells of heroes who were so splendid that for hundreds of years girls and boys, and men and women, have enjoyed learning about them. It may tell, too, what a leader needs to do.

Do leaders need to study? Read about Peter the Great going into other countries to learn from them. Read about Gustavus Adolphus studying so hard that at eighteen he is thought wise enough to be king. How do you answer the question?

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Do leaders care for other people? Mahomet as a child was dearly loved. Kublai Khan was a kind friend, finding many ways in which to show his thoughtfulness. Gustavus died making plans for his baby daughter to be queen. And all these heroes proved generous to their enemies as well as loyal to their friends.

What kind of thinking must leaders do? William sees the alarm of his soldiers when he falls on English soil. They take it for a bad sign. By a quick joke he makes them see that it may be a good sign and so puts heart into them. Gustavus finds the battle going against his forces. He makes a new plan so quickly and carries it out so rapidly that they gain the victory. Mahomet grieves to see his people worship idols and meditates a long time until he thinks of a better kind of worship. Alexander gains many victories, but when he learns that his soldiers think the time has come to return home, he yields to them. Why was this a hard thing for him to do? Of whom were these leaders thinking?

These heroes are from many countries. They

spoke different languages. They worshipped God in different ways. But I think you will find that they agreed in one point: each was living and planning for the success of a great idea. "Think only of the cause," was the message of one of them. Would this be a good rule for any leader? Could a girl or a boy leader use it? What cause is making your home, your school, your city, a better place in which to live?

May every leader who reads this book find success in some great cause.

Your friend,

THE EDITOR.

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HEROES OF CONQUEST AND EMPIRE

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR

I

WILLIAM, Duke of Normandy, was in his royal park, near Rouen, starting forth with many of his knights to the chase. In his hand he held his bow — the great bow which no man but himself could bend — bent and strung and ready for the arrow. The Duke turned to hand it to the page whose office it was to bear it for him. Even as he was in the act, the gate of the park opened and a stranger entered. Travel-worn and dusty, he had the appearance of one who had journeyed fast and far, as indeed he had, for he was a messenger from England.

The stranger greeted Duke William with bended knee; and then, taking him aside, said in a low voice, “King Edward has died and Earl Harold has been crowned King of England.”

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Duke William, hearing his message, spoke never a word; such was the wrath in his countenance that no man dared to speak to him. He



HE HAD THE APPEARANCE OF
ONE WHO HAD JOURNEYED
FAR.

stood motionless save as his fingers laced and unlaced his mantle. The wild beasts of the forest might live at peace that day, for he had no longer any mind to hunt them.

Turning, he strode away from the company, and having crossed the Seine in a boat, he entered the great hall of his castle, where he sat down on a bench, with his head against a pillar,

and covered his face with his mantle. A long time he sat thus. No one dared to ask him what had so angered him.

At last William Fitz Osbern, the Duke's seneschal and intimate friend, entered the hall, humming a tune as he came. He walked

straight by the Duke, still humming cheerfully. Many asked Fitz Osbern what the news might be which had so greatly affected their master. Duke William, hearing, looked up.

Then said Fitz Osbern to the Duke: "It is vain for thee to try to hide that which thou hast heard, for already it is told abroad through all the streets of Rouen. Every man in the city knows now that Edward, King of England, is dead, and that Harold, Earl of Wessex, has been crowned King."

Then answered William: "This is in truth the news that has grieved me. What could grieve me more? For Edward was my kinsman and I sorrow for his death, while it makes me full of wrath that Harold has broken his pledge to me and now holds the kingdom. Thou thyself knowest that Edward, having no heirs, promised the crown to me on his death. And thou canst bear witness how Harold swore upon the sacred relics that he would be my man and receive me as King of England upon Edward's death."

Then answered Fitz Osbern in a loud voice so that all present in the hall could hear: "Yea,

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truly I can bear witness. Well I remember the day when there came to thee here a messenger from Harold. Kneeling before thee, he told thee that Harold, on his way hither with a message from the King, had been shipwrecked. Chance had driven him upon the coast of Ponthieu which was ruled by Count Guy, thy vassal. By him he was held in fetters, and he prayed thee to deliver him. Then thou didst send in swift haste to Count Guy and bade him bring Harold straightway to thee, treating him with all honor. And when Harold came thither, thou and thy lady did load him with kindness. And before he left thee, thou didst promise him thy daughter in marriage, while he swore to thee even as thou hast said."

"Yea," answered Duke William. "When he told me that he had come thither to promise me the crown, I caused him to ratify his promise by an oath. And that his oath might be thrice sacred, I had caused to be placed beneath the altar on which he swore the most sacred relics of the land. After he had sworn the oath, I showed him the relics, that he might know how

utterly he had pledged himself. Methinks even then he plotted treachery, for he grew pale and trembled when he beheld these relics. And now he hath broken his faith and so hath insulted all the saints of Normandy.”

“And now,” said Fitz Osbern, “it seems a time not to mourn but to act. It remains only for thee to carry through that which thou hast begun.”

Thus spoke Fitz Osbern, for he knew well what would please his Lord.

For a moment Duke William looked at him in silence, and then he thundered: “Thou hast well said. I will go to England and take the crown that of right belongs to me.”

II

It seemed well to William first to send an embassy to Harold to remind him of Edward's promise and his own vow and to demand that he give up his crown. This he did, not because he thought that Harold would yield to his demands, but because he wished to put him in the wrong in

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the eyes not only of Normandy but of the other countries of Europe.

“I am King of England,” said Harold, through the envoy, “because it is the will of the people of this country that I rule them. The vow I made thee under force is void, for it lies not in my power to give to thee or to any other man the Crown of England. That can be bestowed by the Witan alone.”

Having received this answer, Duke William prepared to invade England. His barons must first be won to the scheme; for without them, as he told them frankly when he had summoned them before him, he could do nothing. But the wary nobles were reluctant to consent to the scheme. It was one thing to fight for their lord in France, as by their oaths they were bound to do, but quite another to cross the seas to a foreign country. This was a service they were not bound to render.

If they were cautious, the Duke was wily. Many arguments he brought to bear upon them: there were lands and rewards awaiting all who distinguished themselves in his service; there

was the plunder that would make them rich; and, besides, there was the privilege that they might win the favor of God and His saints by avenging the insult offered to the saints of Normandy by Harold in breaking his oath.

The assembly of barons, having heard William's speech, asked time to debate the matter among themselves, and William could but grant their request. Straightway the Assembly broke up



HE SPOKE PRIVATELY WITH THE BARONS.

into groups, all eagerly discussing the great question. While they still wavered in their minds,

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Fitz Osbern enlisted their support to the enterprise by a daring trick. He spoke privately with many of the barons, sympathizing with them in all their reasons for fearing to undertake the expedition.

Finally the barons said to him, "Be thou our spokesman to William, and we will agree to whatever thou sayest."

Then Fitz Osbern stood forth in the assembly and declared to William that his barons were ready to assist him in his undertaking. He promised in the name of the Assembly that every man there present would not only cross the sea himself with the Duke but would bring with him twice the number of knights he was wont to bring to his Lord's service.

"For myself," said Fitz Osbern, "I promise to furnish sixty ships well equipped and filled with warriors."

The barons listened in amazement, and then, perceiving the snare in which they had been caught, broke into an uproar. No wonder they were alarmed, for they feared that if once they granted double the accustomed number of men-

at-arms, William might thereafter claim an equal service on other occasions. Too excited to act as a body, the assembly broke up.

Then William conferred with each baron apart; and such was his persuasiveness that, having been assured that the doubling of his service should not become a promise for the future, each baron in turn agreed to serve him as a volunteer. The cautious William, lest any man should draw back from his promise, had scribes and clerks at hand who set down at once in a book the number of ships and soldiers promised by each man.

In the weeks following, the woods of Normandy resounded with the blows of the axe, while, in the seaboard towns, axe and hammer alike were busy. Six hundred and ninety-six ships were made ready and offered to William by the barons and prelates of his land. These ships were large, open boats with a single mast and sail and a smaller boat attached. The ship which was to convey the Duke himself was the gift of his beloved wife, Matilda. Crimson was its sail; on its figurehead was a boy wrought in gold, blowing an ivory horn which he held to his mouth with

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his left hand, and with his right he pointed toward England. The ship was called the *Mora*.

At last, in the month of August, the Norman fleet was ready to sail. The government of Normandy William left in the hands of the Duchess Matilda, while he hastened to join his fleet in the harbor at the mouth of the Dive. He found his army of now eager volunteers clamorous to depart. But to be wafted to the shores of England, a south wind was necessary, and day after day no south wind blew.

Meanwhile, Harold with a large fleet had been patrolling the coasts of England all summer in order that he might cut off the Normans before ever they could land on English soil. But as William waited at Dive a month for a favorable wind, Harold was obliged to disband his navy both from lack of provisions and because his ships were manned for the most part by farmers and ploughmen who were eager to return to their harvests.

Hearing of this, William, taking advantage of a west wind, moved his fleet to St. Valery, a point nearer the coast of England. Anxiously the

Duke watched the weathercock on the minster of St. Valery. When it turned in the least toward the south, his hopes arose; tears filled his eyes as it again veered to the north. He failed not daily to offer prayers and devotions within the church.

The sky was gloomy; the weather cold and rainy; for fifteen days the powers of nature seemed in league to prevent the enterprise. Many of



ANXIOUSLY THE DUKE WATCHED THE
WEATHERCOCK.

the soldiers muttered in their tents: "Evidently God is against this undertaking. The man is mad who attempts to conquer countries across the seas."

Then, at Duke William's request, the abbot and monks of St. Valery came forth in solemn

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procession, bearing the shrine which contained the body of St. Valery. A carpet was spread on the ground and the shrine placed thereon, so that all could behold it. Humbly, Duke William and his entire army knelt in prayer for a favorable wind. Then each in turn deposited his offering upon the shrine, so that it was completely hidden by the gold pieces heaped upon it.

Seemingly as a reward for their faith and liberality, straightway the desired wind blew. Then a mighty shout of joy rose from the camp. Men embraced each other in their delight. Fear was gone. Why should those so evidently favored by heaven fear either stormy seas or hostile English?

In the midst of their rejoicing came William's order to embark at once. Then there was a friendly rivalry to see who could first be on the ships. Each man's only fear was lest he be left behind. Some came down to the boats, bearing arms and weapons upon their shoulders. Some yoked themselves to wagons laden with spears or provisions. The cavalry hastened to their horses on board. Some were setting up

the masts and unfurling the sails. All was clamor and bustle.

Duke William, having visited once more the minster of St. Valery, this time with thank offerings, boarded his own ship, and immediately launching out into the deep, anchored there, awaiting the others.

Soon all had assembled about their leader's crimson sail. The sounds of the drum, of the cymbal, and of the pipe resounded through the ships. It was now evening. The sky was overcast and the moon hidden.

Suddenly the sound of the trumpet was heard. All listened to hear the herald give the Duke's commands. Each ship was to bear a light. Already from the top of the mast of the *Mora* a huge lantern blazed, to be the guiding beacon of the entire fleet. That they might not reach the English coast before daylight, they were to sail for only a few hours that night, and then rest at anchor until their commander signalled them to advance again.

Having dined, the host set sail, and afterwards anchored as William had commanded.

Before dawn, however, the trumpet sounded and the *Mora's* lantern guided the fleet toward England.

William's boat, as if in response to his eager spirit, outsailed the rest so that when day dawned, his ship was alone. He anchored, and ordered a sailor to climb the mast to see whether any of the other ships could be seen. The sailor could see nothing but the gray sea and the gray sky. Then William cheerfully ordered a bountiful breakfast to be spread and a cask of wine to be opened. He bade his men be of good cheer, for their comrades would soon be with them, inasmuch as God was watching over the safety of the whole fleet.

Again he commanded the sailor to climb the mast. This time the sailor announced that four ships were in sight. Later he cried out that he saw so many masts that it was as if a forest had risen out of the waves. Duke William once more lifted up his heart in praise to God.

III

The southern coast of England was soon in sight. The Norman fleet came to anchor in the ample harbor at Pevensy.

Duke William was the first armed man to step on shore. As he did so, his foot caught, and he was thrown headlong, with both arms outstretched, upon the beach. A cry of grief arose at the unlucky omen, but William's ready wit quickly changed the mishap into an omen of good import.

"Thus," he cried, "I take possession of the soil of England."

No English fleet had interfered with the approach of the Normans to the coast, and now no warrior opposed their landing. Where was the brave Harold at this critical moment when an invading foe threatened his crown?

The question was soon answered by the foragers whom William sent out to get supplies. While the Norman Duke was successfully landing his troops in Southern England, Harold was engaged in deadly conflict with another foe in Northern

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England. The same wind which had so long delayed William's coming, had served to bring an invading army from Norway, under Tostig, Harold's traitor brother, the Norwegian King. Rapidly Harold had marched to the north and beaten the Norwegians in the great battle at Stamford Bridge. But even while the victorious army was feasting in jubilation over the victory won, a messenger arrived with the tidings of William's landing. A double storm had burst upon his country. Harold hurried back to London, calling to his standard as he marched all who were true Englishmen. Six days only he tarried in London, waiting for his fresh levies to join his army; and then he hastened south to meet the enemy.

William, meanwhile, had fixed his camp at Hastings. He allowed his men to plunder at will the surrounding country. Whatever they could not carry off they ruthlessly burned. The Normans seized the boys and girls and even grown women and carried them off as slaves.

No wonder that the tidings of these ravages roused Harold's wrath and hastened his march.

Indeed, this was the wily Duke's intention, for he desired to come to battle at once.

One of Harold's spies was discovered in the Norman camp. William ordered him shown all about, and then, having feasted him, sent him back to Harold. This spy reported to Harold that the army of William was made up largely of priests. This he thought, because the Normans were smooth shaven, — the English allowed the hair and beard to grow long. Harold, knowing the custom, laughed.

"No priests will ye find them in battle," he said. "They be all brave fighting men."

Now the English host is close upon the Normans. To-morrow they will meet and offer battle. This night the English rest in a wood, cheering their hearts with old Saxon songs. The Normans spend the night confessing their sins and sleeping.

At dawn Duke William leads his host forward to meet the enemy. They, too, have risen early, and the Normans, advancing, soon see them drawn up in battle array on the level top of the hill called Senlac.

Duke William halts his army on the heights

opposite Senlac, that he may survey the enemy's arrangement and set his own troops in battle order.

In the centre of the English army, at the crown of the hill, at the very point where the



DRAWN UP IN BATTLE ARRAY.

land begins to slope downward, William perceives the royal standards floating. The Dragon of Wessex gleams in the sunlight, and Harold's own banner is there, picturing a warrior going forth to battle, richly embroidered in gold and blazing with precious stones.

Beneath the standards stands Harold with

his two brothers, Gyrth and Leofwine. About them are ranged his bodyguard and the flower of his army. All these are mail-clad warriors, armed with javelins and swords and the terrible long-handled axe. Some of their shields are kite-shaped, others are round. The front rank stands with shields closely locked, an invincible wall so long as they keep their line. Behind the mail-clad warriors stand, in dense array, the half-armed peasants who have flocked to the standard. They have brought whatever weapons they have. Whether armed with spear or pitchfork, dagger or rude stone hammer, all stand, with stout hearts, awaiting the attack.

Duke William calls for his armor. Hastily donning his shirt of mail, he discovers that he has put it on wrong side to the front. "Thus I change my Duchy for a Kingdom," he laughs, putting to flight the fears of those who are troubled at what they fear is a portent of evil. Around his neck he wears as a charm some of the relics upon which Harold had sworn the oath he had failed to keep.

Now he sets his troops in battle array. In

front are the archers. Behind them William places the heavy-armed footmen. These are protected by shirts of mail extending to the knees, while upon their heads they wear conical helmets with projecting nasals. Their shields are all kite-shaped. Their weapons are long lances. Behind these come the cavalry, armed like the footmen, save that besides the lance they bear heavy short swords.

Two men in the Norman host bear the terrible mace. They are Duke William and his brother, the Bishop of Bayeux. These two ride in the centre of the army beneath the Banner of Normandy and the consecrated standard sent by the Pope.

Duke William makes a vow to erect a mighty minster upon the very spot where the English army awaits him, if victory is his. Now, at the hour of nine, having urged his troops to bear themselves "manfully and wisely," William gives the signal to advance to the attack.

As the Norman lines press forward, Taillefer, a juggling minstrel, rides ahead of the line, as if to challenge the whole English host to do battle with himself alone. From Duke William he

asks and obtains leave to strike the first blow. Riding up the hill, he sings gayly the Song of Roland; and, throwing his sword into the air, he catches it by the hilt as it falls. Some English skirmishers ride down to meet him. The first Taillefer thrusts through with his lance; the second he strikes down with his sword; and then he falls himself, overcome by many blows.

The Normans like not to see him fall, but they comfort themselves with the thought, "A Norman struck the first blow."

Now the Norman archers let fly a shower of arrows, and the army press sturdily up the hill. "God help us" is their battle-cry. "Holy Rood," "God Almighty," are the cries of the English.

The Saxons have left not an inch of level ground for the Normans to stand on. From their vantage ground they hurl showers of hammers and javelins upon the advancing foe. Their positions, together with their great size and enormous strength, give deadly effect to their blows. If any Norman reaches the shield wall and attempts to break in, the terrible battle-axe hews him down, while the English shout, "Out! Out!"

The left of William's line, unable to hold their ground under the showers of missiles, waver, break, and flee. A portion of the English right, unable to resist the temptation, leave their ranks

and pursue the fugitives down the hill.



"HERE I AM, ALIVE."

The disorder spreads to William's centre. He is unhorsed. A cry is raised that he is dead. He hurls from his seat a knight who has refused to give him his horse. He leaps into the saddle. He gallops among the fleeing men.

He tears off his helmet. He shouts, "Here I am, alive, and, please God, we will yet conquer."

The flight is checked; the Normans turn and

slay the English who have ventured down the hill.

Again the lines are formed and advance against the breastwork of shields. Duke William makes straight for the English Standards, for it is his will to meet Harold face to face. But before he comes to him, the Duke is unhorsed by Gyrth. The next moment William has hurled Gyrth to the ground, dead from one fell blow of his dreadful mace. By the blow of another Norman, Leofwine also is slain. Now William has another horse. Again he charges against Harold. Once more he is unhorsed by an English spear, and its owner shares Gyrth's fate at William's hands.

The Norman archers send their arrows to small purpose; for, as they must aim uphill, they can aim only at the shields which protect the first rank, and the other ranks are out of sight. To make the attack effective, William orders the archers to shoot up into the air that the arrows may fall down upon the enemy from above. One fateful arrow pierces Harold's right eye. In agony he supports himself upon his shield, but he does not desert the Standard.

Still the Normans have gained no foothold upon the hill. Now William shows himself a fox as well as a lion. He gives orders for a feigned flight, hoping thus to entice at least a portion of the English from their lines, even as the real flight had lured them earlier in the day.

The Norman lines pretend to flee, and the English leap into the trap, for numbers of them pursue the seeming fugitives.

Too late the English know their error as the fleeing Normans turn and attack them. On the hill in the gap they have left, William secures a foothold.

William now orders a combined attack upon the centre where still waves the Standard. At last the English waver. The shield wall is broken. Harold falls. The Standard is beaten down.

All day the battle has been raging. Night falls. Under cover of the darkness the English rustics take to flight. Yet even as they flee they turn again and again whenever they reach a point of vantage, and work havoc among their Norman pursuers. Of those who stand about the King,

not one flees. They prefer to fight to the death. "They were ever ready with their steel, those sons of the old Saxon race."

The battle was over. The Normans held the field and camped that night among the slain. As William looked over the battle-field by the flaring torchlight, even his stern heart was moved to pity at the sight of the thousand dead or dying. At heavy cost he had vindicated what he believed his right.

On the spot where Harold's banner lay, William knelt and gave his thanks to God. There he planted his own banner and ordered the space cleared and his tent spread thereon.

Amid the cheers of his followers he removed his armor. Shield and helm were dented by many blows, but he was uninjured. Having thanked his men for their valiant aid, he retired to his tent and refreshed himself with food and drink.

All night the Normans watched. On the morrow they buried their dead. Thither came the women of the surrounding country craving for burial the bodies of their kinsfolk. Duke



ON CHRISTMAS DAY THEY CROWNED WILLIAM OF NORMANDY,
KING OF ENGLAND.

William willingly granted their request. Harold's mother came begging the body of her son. She offered its weight in gold if only it might be given her. William gave her the body but refused the gold.

Now Duke William marched slowly toward London, crushing all opposition as he went. The chief men of London came forth to meet him and offered him the crown of England. "They bowed to him for need." On Christmas Day, in Westminster Abbey, those who in the same place in January had anointed Harold King now crowned William of Normandy, King of the English People.

KUBLAI KHAN

I

THE COMING OF THE VENETIANS TO CATHAY

THE two brothers, Nicholas and Maffeo Polo, merchants of Venice, had been led by their zeal for trade to venture even as far as the city of Bokhara in Persia. While they sojourned in that city there came thither two Envoys on their way to the Court of Kublai Khan, lord of all the Tartars. The Envoys beheld the Two Brothers with astonishment, for they had never before seen Europeans in that part of the world.

They said to the Brothers, "If ye will follow our counsel, ye shall find great honor and profit for yourselves."

They replied, "We shall assuredly be right glad to learn how."

Then said the Envoys: "The Great Khan hath never beheld any Latins, and it is his great de-

sire to do so. If, therefore, ye will travel in our company to his Court, ye may be certain that he will be rejoiced to see you, and he will treat you with the greatest honor and generosity. Furthermore, in our company ye can travel in perfect safety."

The Venetians decided to follow the advice of the Envoys; and having made their arrangements, they travelled together for a whole year until they came to Cathay to the Court of Kublai Khan.

The great lord of all the Tartars received them most graciously; and, since the brothers could speak the Tartar language fluently, he held much converse with them. He asked them all manner of questions about the rulers and people of Europe, inquiring especially how they carried on war and how they were governed. He inquired also about the Christian religion and about the Pope. The merchants answered all his questions so truthfully, yet discreetly, that the Great Monarch was immensely pleased with them.

Then Kublai Khan conceived that he would send the brothers on an embassy to the Pope,

and the Polos agreed that they would carry out his wish even as though he were their Sovereign Lord.

The Great Khan summoned one of his Barons to his presence and desired him to make ready to accompany the brothers. Afterwards the Khan caused letters to be written in the Tartar tongue, from himself to the Pope. In these letters he urged the Pope to send him at least one hundred Christian teachers, men intelligent and well educated, who could prove to idolaters and to all others by argument that the Christian religion was better than all others, promising that, if they could prove this, he himself and all under him would become Christians and acknowledge the authority of the Pope.

This letter, with the messages they were to deliver by word of mouth, Kublai Khan intrusted to the two brothers and his own Baron. He also charged them to bring back some oil from the Lamp which burns on the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. And the Khan gave them a gold Tablet of Authority, on which it was written that his Envoys should be supplied with everything

needful throughout the journey, whether food, or horses, or guides, in all the countries through which they might pass.

Now when the three Envoys had travelled some days, the Baron fell ill. Having waited a time for his recovery, the brothers thought it best to leave him behind while they themselves proceeded to carry out the Khan's commission.

The Baron was well pleased to have them do so. Accordingly they travelled on.

Owing to the Tablet of Authority which they bore, all things which they asked for were provided them, for the Great Khan was a very great Lord indeed. He was the overlord of nearly all of Asia and of Eastern Europe, even to the Volga and to the borders of Poland. Almost half the human race gave him their allegiance. But even the Tablet of Authority could not melt the great snows, nor quench the heavy rains, nor dry up raging torrents, so that it took the brothers three years to journey as far as Ayas, a city on the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean, in Armenia.

Then they proceeded to Acre, where they

learned that the Pope was dead and that no new one had yet been elected. It seemed good to the brothers, since they could not carry out the Khan's commission until a new Pope was chosen, to go to Venice and see their families. Nicholas found that his wife had died during his absence, but that his son Marco, now a promising youth of fifteen, was still living.

For two years they tarried in Venice, waiting for a new Pope to be elected. At the end of that time it seemed to them that they could no longer delay their return to Cathay, for they could not bear to think that the Khan would consider them unfaithful to their mission. For this reason, they set forth from Venice, taking Marco with them. However, having started on their way, they received tidings that at last a Pope had been chosen, and they joyfully turned back to seek him.

The new Pope received them graciously and appointed two Friars of the Order of Preachers, men of great learning, to accompany them to Cathay, and he gave them gifts to bestow upon Kublai Khan.

Then the brothers and Marco set forth again, and the Friars with them, and they carried with them oil from the Lamp on the Holy Sepulchre as Kublai had requested. When they had travelled no farther than Ayas, the Friars, terrified by the perils of the way, declared that they would go no farther. Accordingly they turned back, but the three Venetians travelled on, winter and summer, for three and a half years, until at last they came to the Great Khan.

When Kublai Khan heard that Nicholas and Maffeo Polo were on their way back to him, he sent a company forth full forty days' journey, to escort them into his royal presence, in his summer palace in Shangtu.

Guided by their escort, the brothers and Marco entered a park of surpassing beauty, surrounded by a wall sixteen miles in circuit. They beheld beautiful glades, streams, groves of rare and magnificent trees, and many a wild animal darting to cover, for the Khan kept in his park all manner of wild animals that are not ferocious, to supply food for his hawks and gerfalcons, of which he had here many hundred.



AT LAST THE TRAVELLERS REACHED THE WONDERFUL PALACE.

At last the travellers reached the wonderful palace built of the finest marble, where, in the Great Hall, Kublai Khan, lord of all the Tartars, sat awaiting their approach, with his Barons about him. At every door of the hall stood two men of gigantic stature armed with staves. Marco had already learned from his father that he would always find them standing at the doors of whatever rooms the Khan might be occupying, to see that no one stepped upon the threshold in entering the room, for that they thought an evil omen.

Taking heed to their steps, they entered the Great Hall, which, like all the smaller halls and rooms of the palace, was covered with gilt on which were painted, with exquisite art, men, beasts, birds, and many kinds of trees and flowers most pleasing to the eye.

At the farther end of the chamber, Kublai Khan sat upon an elevated throne, clad in robes of yellow silk, wrought with beaten gold and gleaming with precious stones and girt with a golden girdle. All the great company of Barons about him were clad in the same manner as their



KHAN SAT UPON AN ELEVATED THRONE.

lord ; their robes were all of the same color as his and were also embroidered with gold, though they were not so costly. All that they wore was of one color from their yellow turbans to their yellow satin boots.

The Venetians drew near his Majesty, and paid their respects to him by bending the knee and prostrating themselves on the floor before him.

The Khan straightway commanded them to rise and showed the greatest pleasure at their coming, asking them many questions as to their welfare, especially on their journey. They answered, "We have in truth sped well since we find your Majesty in good health."

They then presented him with the letters and gifts sent him by the Pope, and after that with the oil from the Holy Sepulchre, all of which pleased him well.

Observing Marco Polo, the Khan asked who the young man in their company was.

"This, Sire," replied Nicholas, "is my son and thy servant."

"He, too, is welcome, and I am well pleased,"

quoth Kublai, and he caused Marco Polo to be enrolled on his list of attendants.

In honor of their arrival, Kublai made a great feast, with much rejoicing; the brothers and Marco received honor and attention from every one.

They abode at the Court with the other Barons. As long as they remained in the land, the Great Khan honored them even above his own Barons.

Young Marco soon showed himself a youth of great promise and discretion. He made rapid progress in learning the customs and the language of the Tartars. Indeed he soon could speak several tongues, besides being able to read and write four languages. Kublai Khan, observing his ability, soon employed him on important missions.

The Great Khan really loved his people and desired their welfare. Every year he sent his commissioners to discover whether any of his subjects had lost their crops through violent storms or droughts or by locusts or worms or other plague. If any had thus suffered, he would not only remit their taxes that year but would

also supply them with corn from his granaries both for food and for planting their fields. For this reason he made great collections of grain in times of plenty, so that he might be able to relieve famine and distress when they should occur.

Likewise when there had been great loss of cattle in some district, from his own herds he would make good the loss to those who were afflicted.

The first important service Kublai Khan intrusted to Marco Polo was to send him to ascertain the condition of a province a full six months' journey distant. Young Marco made note on his journey of the interesting and peculiar customs of the countries along his route, so that when he returned to Court, he was able not only to relate clearly the matters relating to the business on which he had been sent, but also to entertain the Khan with a vivacious and intelligent account of what he had seen and heard throughout his trip, to his Majesty's great surprise and delight.

"If this young man lives," quoth the Khan, "he will become a man of great worth and reputation."

II

THE FEAST OF THE NEW YEAR

The summer months the Great Khan was wont to spend at Shangtu, because of the coolness of the place ; but at the end of August he proceeded to his capital city, the city we call Peking to-day, but which was then known as Cambaluc.

Time would fail to tell all the wonders of his great palace there. It was only one story in height, but the roof was very lofty, and, as Marco Polo tells us, "The Hall of the Palace is so large that it could easily dine six thousand people ; and it is quite a marvel to see how many rooms there are besides. The building is altogether so vast, so rich, and so beautiful, that no man on earth could design anything superior to it. The outside of the roof also is covered with vermilion and yellow and green and blue and other hues, which are fixed with a varnish so fine and exquisite that they shine like crystal and lend a resplendent lustre to the Palace as seen for a great way round." Within the Palace "you could see nothing but gold and silver and paintings" on walls and ceilings.

In this Palace were held the great feasts of the year, which were the celebration of the Khan's birthday and the feast of the New Year.

Marco Polo, who was often present at these feasts with his Father and Uncle, has told us how they celebrated these days.

It was the custom, on the beginning of their new year, for the Khan and all his subjects, men and women, high and lowly, to dress entirely in white. This they did to insure good fortune for themselves through the year, for they deemed white clothing a bearer of good fortune.

On the first day of their year, too, the people of all the provinces and kingdoms which owed allegiance to the Khan were wont to bring him great gifts of gold and silver, pearls and rubies, and rich textures of various kinds. Moreover, more than one hundred thousand white horses, most beautiful animals, richly caparisoned, were each year presented to the Khan.

Besides giving gifts to the Emperor, the people also exchanged white gifts among themselves, and making merry, wished one another happiness throughout the year.

On this great feast day, all the Khan's elephants, numbering no less than five thousand, passed in parade. All of them were covered with gay housings of cloth richly embroidered with gold and silk in figures of birds and beasts, and each animal bore upon its back two splendid coffers filled with the Khan's gold plate and other furnishings for the feast. Behind the elephants followed a vast number of camels, also richly caparisoned and also laden with things needful for the feast. As all these passed in procession before the Emperor, it was, to the Venetians at least, "the finest sight in the world."

Furthermore, before the tables were set for the feast, all the Kings, Dukes, Marquesses, Counts, Barons, Knights, and other officials from all the places thereabout presented themselves before the Emperor in the Great Hall, while those for whom there was no place in the Hall stood without in such a position that the Khan could behold them all. When every man was seated according to his rank, a great prelate rose and said, "Bow yourselves and adore."

Instantly all the company bowed down until

their foreheads touched the ground, as if Kublai Khan were a god. Then the prelate said, "God bless our lord and long preserve him in the enjoyment of happiness."

All answered, "So may it be."

Then the prelate said, "May God enlarge his Empire and increase its prosperity more and more, and may abundance prevail throughout his Dominion."

The people again said, "So may it be."

Then all prostrated themselves to the earth four times, a ceremony after which each man went in turn to an altar, richly adorned, on which lay a red tablet with the Khan's name inscribed thereon. When the prelate had perfumed the tablet and the altar reverently with incense, each man humbly prostrated himself before the tablet. When this was finished and each man had returned to his place, they forthwith presented Kublai Khan the gifts they had brought him. After the Khan had looked over the great display, the tables were prepared for the feast, at which both men and women were present.

44 HEROES OF CONQUEST AND EMPIRE

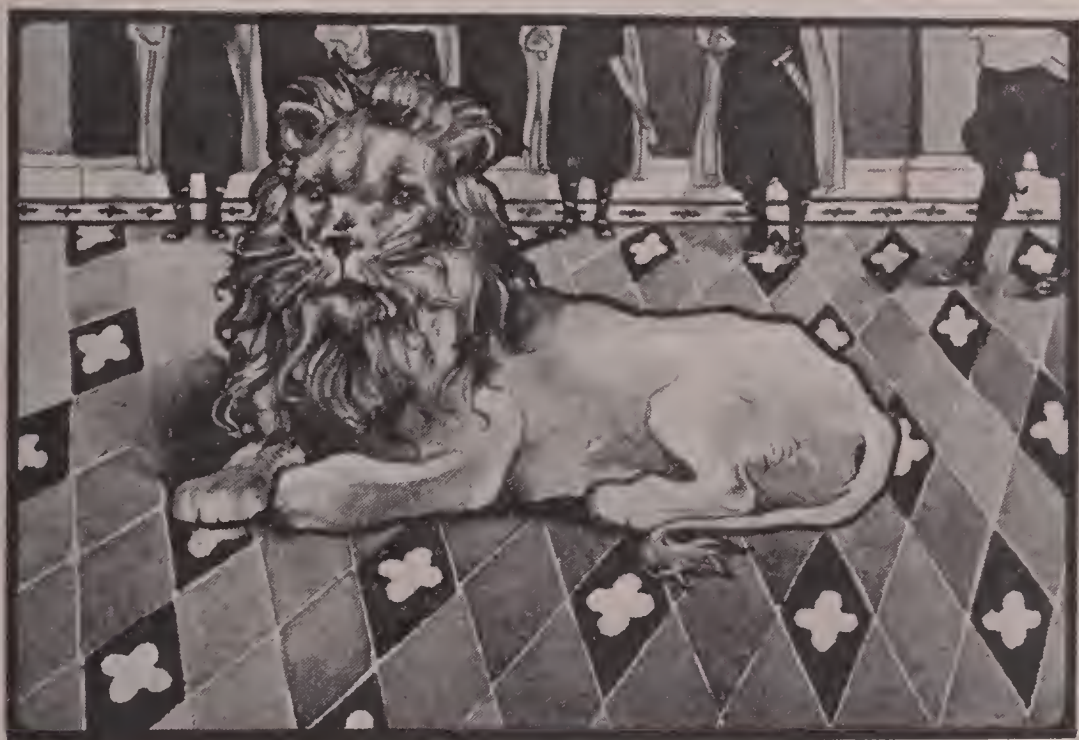
These tables were arranged in rows, with two people at each table. At the north end of the Hall sat Kublai Khan, with his chief wife beside him, his table being elevated high above all the others. On his right sat his sons and his nephews, but lower, so that their heads were on a level with his feet. The other Barons sat with their wives at tables still lower. Great as the Hall was, the tables were so arranged that the Khan could see them all. On each table was set a golden flagon filled with wine, with a golden cup for each guest.

Throughout the feast, certain Barons went about constantly to see that every one was rightly seated and that the servants kept all well supplied with food and drink.

Those who waited upon the Khan himself were Barons of the highest rank who were obliged to hold fine napkins of gold-embroidered silk before their faces lest any breath of theirs might reach their lord's food. When the Great Khan called for drink, the Baron who handed it to him retired three spaces and kneeling down made a deep prostration before his Majesty, upon which

all who were present prostrated themselves. At the same time, the musicians, with flutes, harps, and lutes, all began to play. Then the Khan drank. And each time he drank this same ceremony was repeated.

When all had dined and the tables had been removed, a great lion was led into the Hall, which, when it came before Kublai Khan, lay



THERE IT REMAINED LYING, ENTIRELY UNCHAINED.

down before him with every sign of reverence as if it acknowledged him master. There, before the ruler, it remained lying, entirely unchained.

Then entered a great number of players and jugglers skilled in the most marvellous feats, who performed before the Khan and his guests, causing great amusement, so that every one laughed and enjoyed himself.

When the performance was over, every man went to his own quarters.

III

THE WICKEDNESS OF ACHMATH

The natives of Cathay, whom we call the Chinese, were subjects of the Great Khan, not because such was their choice, but because he had conquered them; and Kublai Khan was wont to employ his own Tartars or Christians or Saracens in all important positions. This he did because he deemed that those who were foreigners in the country would be more devoted to his interests than the people whom he had conquered.

There was a certain Saracen, named Achmath, who had more influence with the Khan than any other Baron; in fact the Khan held him in such high favor that he allowed him to do what he

pleased. So absolutely did Kublai Khan accede to his wishes that it was believed that Achmath gained his power over him by means of sorcery.

Achmath gave away all public offices and pronounced judgment against all offenders. If he bore ill will toward any man, he had only to go to the Khan and say, "Such a person has committed an offense against your Majesty and is deserving of death."

The Emperor would reply, because of his faith in Achmath, "Do as you judge best."

Straightway Achmath would cause the man whom he disliked to be executed. Men felt such fear of incurring his displeasure that a man who was accused to the Emperor of a capital crime and who wished to furnish proofs of his innocence could find no man who would dare to bear witness in his favor.

Further, this Achmath had accumulated great treasure by taking bribes from every one who desired an appointment. He also had twenty-five sons who held important offices; and of these no less than seven committed abominable wickedness under cover of their father's authority.

For twenty-two years the people suffered under Achmath's uncontrolled power. At length the Cathayans could endure his multiplied acts of injustice no longer; they secretly conspired to slay him and revolt against the government. Two leaders in the plot were Chenchu, commander of a thousand, who for good reason was burning with resentment against Achmath, and Vanchu, commander of ten thousand.

They decided that the time to carry the plot into execution would be during the Khan's absence from the city in summer, when Achmath remained in charge of the city. Having arrived at this decision, Vanchu and Chenchu imparted their intention to certain leading Cathayans, through whom word was passed on to their friends in many other cities. The plan was that upon a certain day when a signal should be given by beacon fires, they should massacre all the men with beards in their cities. The order was given in this way because the Christians, Saracens, and Tartars wore beards and the Cathayans were naturally beardless.

At the time appointed, Chenchu and Vanchu

entered the palace at night. Vanchu, sitting down in one of the royal seats, caused a number of lights to be kindled before him. Forthwith he sent a messenger to Achmath's residence requiring his immediate attendance upon Chinkin, the Great Khan's eldest son, who, it was pretended, had arrived unexpectedly.

Achmath was much surprised at this intelligence but as he stood in much awe of the Prince

he hastened to the palace. At the gate he met a Tartar named Cogatai who was captain of the twelve thousand troops that formed the garrison of the city.

He asked, "Whither do you go at this late hour?"

"To Chinkin, who has just arrived," answered Achmath.

"How can that be?" quoth Cogatai. "How



CHENCHU AND VANCHU ENTERED THE PALACE AT NIGHT.

could he arrive so secretly that I should know nothing of it?"

Nevertheless he followed Achmath with a number of his soldiers.

When Achmath came inside the palace and saw all the illumination, he prostrated himself before Vanchu, supposing him to be the Prince. Where-

upon Chenchu, who was standing ready with his sword, straightway cut off Achmath's head.

The Cathayans believed that if only Achmath were slain they would have naught else to fear. But Cogatai, who had halted at the door and had seen what occurred, shouted, "Treason," and instantly let fly an arrow which slew Vanchu where he



COGATAI INSTANTLY LET FLY
AN ARROW.

sat. At the same time he gave orders to his soldiers to seize Chenchu and he sent a proclama-

tion through the city to slay all people who were on the streets. But the Cathayans, perceiving that their plot had been discovered and being deprived of their leaders, kept still in their houses and so were unable to give the signal by beacon fires to the other cities.

Cogatai immediately sent a careful account of all that had occurred to the Khan. Kublai sent back word for him to investigate the matter and award punishment according to the guilt of those involved in the plot. Accordingly, Cogatai put to death all who were discovered to be leaders, and had the same thing done in the other cities when it was learned that the plot had extended to them.

When the Emperor returned to his capital, he was anxious to know the reasons which had led to the rising; he called upon Marco Polo to explain the matter. Then Marco with great boldness related the crimes and oppressions of Achmath, which had made him an object of detestation throughout the Empire.

Kublai Khan's eyes were opened, and he praised the courage of Vanchu. The Khan also com-

plained that his courtiers who had refrained from admonishing him as to what was going on had put their fear of Achmath above their devotion to the interests of the state.

Then he commanded to have the body of Achmath dug up and cast to the dogs, and he condemned the seven sons, who had shared in their father's wickedness, to be flayed alive.

IV

THE DEPARTURE OF THE VENETIANS FROM CATHAY

When the three Venetians had been in the service of Kublai Khan seventeen years, and had accumulated great wealth for themselves in gold and jewels, the longing to see their native city became so great that it overshadowed every other desire. Kublai Khan was now an old man, and if he should die there was no hope that they would ever see Italy again, for only the protection and assistance of the friendly Emperor could make the hazardous journey through Asia possible.

Accordingly, one day, when Kublai was par-

ticularly cheerful, Niccolo threw himself down at his feet and begged his Majesty's gracious permission for himself and his family to return to Italy. But so far from granting his request, the Great Khan appeared greatly hurt.

"What motive can you have," he asked, "for wishing to leave me and to endure the risks of such a long and dangerous journey in which you would probably lose your lives? Is it gain that you seek? Then I will give you double all that you have. Do you seek greater honors? Then I will give you your hearts' desires, whatever they may be. Only, I have such affection for you and I prize so highly your company, that I positively refuse to grant your petition to leave me."

When the affairs of the Venetians were in this pass, there came to the Court three Ambassadors with a gallant retinue, from Argon, lord of the Levant. The wife of Argon, who had lately died, had besought him to take no other lady for his wife save one of her own family which dwelt in Cathay. In compliance with her wish, then, Argon had sent this embassy to ask of Kublai Khan a bride of his former wife's family.

The Emperor received them most graciously, and straightway sent for Cocachin, a very beautiful and charming maiden. On her arrival at Court he presented her to the Ambassadors as the lady chosen in accordance with their request, and they declared themselves highly pleased.

When everything had been arranged for their departure, and a numerous suite of attendants had been selected to accompany the promised Queen of King Argon, they received from the Khan his gracious permission to depart.

For six months they travelled back over the same route whence they had come, but then they found all further progress in that direction impossible because of wars which had broken out between certain Tartar princes. Accordingly, they returned reluctantly to the Court of Kublai Khan, and acquainted him with the cause of their retreat.

At the time of their reappearance in Court, Marco Polo returned from a journey to India, whither he had gone as the Khan's Ambassador, and made his report of all that he had seen on his travels and of the seas over which he had voyaged.

When the three Ambassadors heard of his

travels, they were greatly impressed. Already they had observed that the Venetians were men of uncommonly good sense, and they sought conversation with them. Sharing confidences, the Venetians learned that Argon's Ambassadors were in great haste to return to their country, having already been gone three years. The Ambassadors likewise learned that the Venetians were on fire to return to Venice. And so it was agreed that the Ambassadors with their young Queen Cocachin should seek an audience with the Khan and request that they be permitted to make the return journey by water. Then, if the Khan acceded to their request, they were to beg his Majesty to allow the Venetians to accompany them, so that they might profit by Marco's knowledge and experience of the Indian seas. This plan was carried out.

His Majesty listened graciously to their requests until they asked that the three Latins might return with them. At that, the Khan's countenance darkened, and yet he could not with propriety refuse. Reluctantly, he sent for the three Polos, and having assured them of his

unvarying affection for them, he required from them a promise that they would return to him in a few years. To make their return possible, he gave them gold Tablets of Authority as on former occasions. Also he intrusted to them messages to deliver to the King of France, to the King of England, to the King of Spain, and to all other Christian princes.

Meanwhile a fleet of thirteen large ships was made ready and stocked with provisions for two years. These ships were each provided with four masts and twelve sails, and some of them were so large that they carried crews of no less than two hundred and fifty men. When all was ready the Two Brothers and Marco took their leave of the Great Khan, and received from him as a farewell token of his Majesty's favor a great number of rubies and other beautiful gems. Then, with the lovely Queen Cocachin and her retinue all went on board the ships, a very great company.

A year and nine months they sailed, beholding many marvels on the way, until they came to the land whither they were bound. Of their

number six hundred had died, among them two of King Argon's barons, but of the maidens on board one only had perished. Meanwhile, King Argon himself had died, so that when the young bride at last reached his kingdom, she was given to Argon's son in marriage.

The Brothers and Marco had watched over and guarded Queen Cocachin and her maidens as if they had been their daughters, so that when the Venetians took their leave of Queen Cocachin to return to their own country, she wept for sorrow.

About this time, tidings came to them of the death of Kublai Khan, and hearing that, they knew they would never again visit Cathay.

As to the return of the three travellers to Venice and as to how they were put to it to prove even to their own kinsmen that they were themselves, so changed they were in appearance in the long years since they had departed from Venice, and how, in war with Genoa, Marco was taken prisoner and in prison related to a friend, who wrote them down, all the tales of his travels in the East and of the mighty Kublai Khan, — all this would be “another story.”

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS, THE LION OF THE NORTH

I

THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

DURING the years when the English Pilgrims and Puritans were coming to America to win religious freedom, there was being waged in Germany a most cruel and dreadful war. This war is known in history as the Thirty Years' War.

Germany, at that time, was made up of several principalities, each under its own duke or prince. Seven of the most important princes were called electors because it was their duty to elect the Emperor, who, in name at least, was the ruler over all Germany.

At the time when the Thirty Years' War began, a large part of the population of Germany were Protestants, perhaps as many as nine-tenths. Many of the princes, however, were Catholics.

In 1619, the electors, on the death of the Emperor, elected in his stead Ferdinand, of the House of Hapsburg, an Austrian prince, a man of iron will and a Catholic.

The Emperor Ferdinand determined to make his rule over Germany a real one, instead of one that existed only in name. He determined, also, to force Germany back into the Catholic faith. The effort to carry out this double purpose resulted in a terrible war which made Germany a desert and put back her development at least a hundred years.

In the first twelve years of the war, all went badly for the Protestants. They were divided among themselves and beaten by the Emperor's armies. Apparently the liberties of Germany were to be lost, and Protestantism crushed. The Protestant King of Denmark came to their assistance, but he was well whipped by the imperial armies under the generals Tilly and Wallenstein, and then, having been bribed with a large sum of money to keep out of the contest thereafter, he returned to Denmark, and all Europe laughed at him in scorn.

In despair, the Protestants of Germany turned to Gustavus Adolphus, the King of Sweden, and implored him to come to their assistance.

II

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AND HIS PEOPLE

“Don’t go into that wood,” said his nurse to Gustavus Adolphus one day when he was but three years old; “there are big snakes there.”

“Just give me a big stick,” the little one answered, “and I will soon kill them all.”

The boy’s education was very careful and thorough. Distinguished men who had travelled much in Europe were his tutors. When he reached manhood, Gustavus Adolphus could talk fluently in five different languages and could read seven. When he had reached his tenth year, he used to attend the debates of the Council and to assist in receiving ambassadors from foreign countries. Indeed the boy was often called upon to make the speech of welcome on such occasions.

One of his tutors was an able soldier who instructed him in the art of war. There came to

the Swedish court many soldiers of different nations, who had taken part in foreign wars. They found in the child an absorbed listener to their tales of adventure. He would steal time



ONE OF HIS TUTORS WAS AN ABLE SOLDIER.

from sleep and from his books to ask them questions. The Viking blood that flowed in his veins leaped at their tales.

At the age of eleven, the young prince entered the army at the lowest step. Patiently he worked his way up. When he was sixteen, his country was engaged in a campaign in Russia in which

the boy soldier was eager to join. Forbidden the privilege, he experienced intense disappointment and chagrin. His opportunity came in a few months, however, when he was overjoyed at receiving a command in the war with Denmark.

The next year brought troubles enough for him to grapple with, for his father's death brought him to the throne of Sweden. By the law of



HE WAS NOBLE IN APPEARANCE.

Sweden, a king might not rule Sweden in his own name until he was twenty-four years of age. The Estates, or Legislature of Sweden, however, declared Gustavus already of age and crowned him King with full powers. Tall, broad-shouldered, and handsome, with clear blue eyes and golden yellow hair, he was

noble in appearance as well as in character. Never did Sweden regret the confidence she

showed in the young King. Through the twenty-one years he ruled the land, King and people were united in rare love and trust.

The young King was forced to battle for the defence both of his crown and of his country. There were wars to fight with Russia, Poland, and Denmark. When, seventeen years later, these contests were brought to an end, Gustavus had extended Sweden's boundaries on the east as far as where Petrograd now stands, thus gaining control of the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea.

Meanwhile, both Gustavus and his army had been receiving a training in the art of war which was to be of the greatest service. His army of stout, loyal Swedish peasants surpassed every other army in Europe in discipline, steadiness, and equipment. If the peasants were steady and reliable, the high-spirited nobles who commanded them were equally devoted to their King and general. Gustavus had made many improvements in the weapons used by his troops and in the arrangement of his forces in battle, which made it possible for them to move about easily and swiftly.

Even while the King was occupied with his

northern wars, requests for aid had come to him from the distressed Protestants of Germany. As soon as he was free to enter the lists as their champion, he resolved to respond to their appeals for help.

As he was wont to ask the advice of his Council and of the Estates in all matters, he now called them together, and thus addressed them :

“Ferdinand is on the Baltic ; he has nearly all the ports in his hands. His whole aim is to destroy Swedish commerce, and soon to plant a foot on the southern shores of our Fatherland. Sweden is in danger from the power of Hapsburg ; that is all, but it is enough ; that power must be met swiftly and strongly. . . . The danger is great. It is no time to ask whether the cost will not be far beyond what we can bear. . . . For myself, I foresee that I have no more rest to expect but the rest of eternity. . . . The fight will be for parents, for wife and child, for house and home, for Fatherland and faith.”

The Estates were won by his appeal, and voted at once to levy heavy taxes and to raise an army. All classes, nobles, merchants, and peasants,

were ready to make sacrifices in loyal support of the King they trusted.

Before setting sail from Sweden, Gustavus once more called his Estates together to say farewell. It was a solemn occasion, for both King and people had a foreboding that they should never see each other again. Gustavus brought before them in his arms his little three-year-old daughter Christina and commended her to their love and protection. If he were to die, she would be the successor to his throne. Gustavus told his people how the country was to be governed during his absence, and went over again the reasons for entering upon such a great undertaking.

“As to what concerns me,” he said, “I am not unaware of the dangers to which I expose myself. Already many times my blood has flowed for Sweden, and my love for the country doubtless will cost my life some day, for it is by being often carried to the fountain that the pitcher is finally broken. That is why, before leaving the country this time, I commend ye all, dear people of Sweden, to the protection of God, and bid you farewell, perhaps forever.”

III

THE "SNOW KING"

With about fifteen thousand troops, Gustavus set sail from Sweden and cast anchor off the island of Rügen in June, 1630. In a little boat, the King led the disembarking of his troops. As soon as he had landed, he knelt and prayed aloud earnestly. Then, first of the army, he seized a spade and began work on the intrenchment which was to guard the landing of his troops.

The King's first task was to secure the coast of northern Germany, in order to be sure of his communications by sea with Sweden. Having accomplished this, he advanced slowly into Germany, capturing and garrisoning the strong places. He was determined to leave no enemy to rise in his rear and cut off his retreat.

His army was under strict discipline. The soldiers whom he quartered in private houses were forbidden to demand more than bed, salt, vinegar, and the right to cook at the fire. All supplies were scrupulously paid for.

This was in marked contrast to the conduct

of the troops of Tilly and of Wallenstein, the Emperor's generals, who lived upon the country, plundering, burning, and, in their lawless cruelty, sparing neither women nor children.

The two armies of Ferdinand together numbered more than a hundred and thirty-five thousand. Small, indeed, in comparison, seemed the little army of fifteen thousand which Gustavus brought to Germany. The Imperialists despised him. "So we have got a new little enemy, have we?" sneered the Emperor. "The Snow King," mocked Wallenstein, "will melt away like the snows of his northern kingdom if he advances into Germany."

Meanwhile most of the German princes, the very ones who had urged his coming, received Gustavus very coldly. They would wait and see what he could do before coming to his assistance. John George, the Elector of Saxony, the most powerful Protestant prince of Germany, was especially stubborn in his refusal to join Gustavus. This prince, who was a hard drinker and an enthusiastic sportsman, hoped to keep out of trouble by remaining neutral.

"It is no time to be neutral," urged the Swedish

king. "You must either be with us or be considered our enemies." To all the princes who still hung back he spoke plainly, "Either join us, or I will leave you to fight your battles alone."

John George, however, turned a deaf ear to Gustavus, until forced by the Emperor himself to choose which side he would support.

"Restore to the Catholics all church property which the Protestants have taken possession of during the past seventy-five years," demanded Ferdinand of John George. "Disband your army and come with your subjects and serve in my army under Tilly."

Tilly himself came into Saxony with the imperial army to enforce these demands. Two hundred blazing villages marked his path across Saxony toward Leipsic. This was more than John George could stand. "What a reward," said he, "for my refusal to join the Swedes against the Emperor!"

Now, finally, reduced to extremities, John George fairly threw himself into the arms of the Swedish king. An alliance was made between them. John George swore to furnish pay and rations to the Swedish army for a month, and to

open his cities and the passes in his country to the Swedish army. He swore to join his army to the King's, and to relinquish to Gustavus the supreme command. Gustavus promised to stand by John George to the last extremity and to drive the Emperor's army from Saxony.

So deep was the Elector's wrath that he was eager to join in battle with Tilly at once. Indeed, he declared that if Gustavus were unwilling to offer battle, he himself would alone attack the Emperor's army.

IV

THE BATTLE OF LEIPSIK

Though Gustavus had been in Germany now fourteen months he had not been able to force the enemy to join him in a decisive battle. At last the opportunity had come. Tilly and his army, over thirty thousand strong, were encamped on the plains outside Leipsic. Gustavus with his new allies advanced toward him.

The night before the battle the Swedes slept but seven miles distant from the enemy ; Gustavus

slept in his travelling coach with two of his generals. "As soon as the sky began to gray," wrote Gustavus afterwards, "I gave the order for the trumpets to blow for the advance, and, because between us and Leipsic there was no wood, but only great flat fields, I drew out my army in full battle array and marched toward the city. The march lasted a short hour and a half when we came in sight of the advanced guard of the enemy with his artillery on a hill and behind it the whole mass of the army."

As they stood in position for battle, the Saxon army was by itself at the left of the Swedish formation. Of these Saxons, Gustavus wrote, "The Saxons were well mounted and fine fellows to look at." A certain doughty Scotchman who served in the army of Gustavus also has left us a word as to the appearance of the allied armies. "The Saxon officers," says he, "looked as if they were going in their best apparel and arms to be painted;" and of the Swedes he says, "having lain overnight on a parcel of ploughed ground, they were so dusty, they looked like kitchen servants."

Gustavus himself wore no armor over his ordinary buff coat; and on his head he wore only a gray hat with a green feather. The whole Swedish army wore cheerful green twigs in their hats, and their rallying cry was, "God with us."

Gustavus had his infantry and cavalry interspersed in groups. Riding his great war horse, he commanded a company of cavalry on the right, while Field Marshal Horn, the second in command, directed the Swedish left.

Comparing the army of Gustavus with that which faced him under Tilly, an eye-witness says, "Tattered and worn and dirty looked our people compared with the besilvered and begilded and beplumed Imperialists. Our Swedish horses were but small compared to the gigantic German chargers; our Swedish peasant lads made a poor show alongside the handsome troops of Tilly." The gold and silver ornaments which decked the garments of the imperialistic army, and the plumes which nodded from their caps, were the plunder of hundreds of towns.

Their commander, Tilly, now an old man of seventy-two, had the reputation of never having

lost a battle. Many of his men had been following him for twenty years ; they were well-seasoned warriors. As the old man rode along the lines on his familiar little white pony, clad in old-fashioned Walloon costume, — slashed hose, a doublet of green satin, and a red ostrich plume hanging down to his belt from his small cocked hat, — thousands of voices greeted him with cries of “Father Tilly ! Father Tilly !”

All the imperial army fastened white handkerchiefs in their hats. “Jesus-Mary,” was their war cry. Tilly’s cavalry on his right wing, opposite the Swedes under Horn, was under Colonel Pappenheim, a dashing, intrepid, high-spirited officer. The cavalry Pappenheim commanded, the famous “black cuirassiers,” thus called from their black armor, was the finest body of cavalry in Europe.

As soon as the imperialist saw the Swedish army within range of their guns, Tilly’s artillery opened fire and forced the Swedes to advance and take their positions under its constant hammering. But as soon as Gustavus’ cannon were in position, they answered the Emperor’s cannon “three

shots to one," and, as the King's gunners were the surest of aim in Europe, his guns did fearful execution.

Finally, having been tormented for over two hours by the galling fire of the Swedish artillery, Pappenheim lost patience. Without receiving any command from his general, Tilly, the impetuous officer led his five thousand cavalry in what appeared to be an irresistible onset against the Swedes opposite him.

Now the friends and the foes of the shabby, undersized Swedish peasants learned the stuff of which they were made. Not once, but seven times did Pappenheim hurl his cavalry against the Swedish columns. Every time they were repulsed. Nay more, the seventh attack of the "black devils" resulted in their absolute rout. They fled, pursued by the left wing of the Swedes.

When Tilly saw Pappenheim separate himself from his army and sweep forward in his first reckless attack, the old man threw up his arms in despair. "They have robbed me of my honor and my glory," he cried, "and the Emperor of his empire and his people." To second Pappenheim's

attack, however, Tilly ordered his cavalry on his right wing to charge the Saxons, who were in position opposite them, so grand in their brave new clothes and their fine looks.

“The Saxon cavalry, and their artillery men,” wrote the King, “held themselves bravely at first, but after their best gunners were shot, the rest began to fly and left their cannons. The Saxon infantry did no better; it ran away by companies and spread the report that we were beaten and all was lost, which terrified our baggage train, which also ran away as far as Düben. . . . The Elector, who had remained in the rear, ran away with his whole life guard and never stopped until he got to Eilenburg.” It is said that the Saxons lost more men in their flight than the Swedes lost in the battle.

When Tilly saw the Saxons in flight, he thought to complete the defeat of his enemy, whom he now outnumbered three to one, by attacking the left wing of the Swedes in flank, as it had been left exposed by the flight of the Saxons. But by the time Tilly had brought his troops around, Gustavus, who had guessed his intention, had wheeled

the Swedish left about to face the threatened attack, so that instead of being able to strike the Swedes on their flank, Tilly found an all new battle front awaiting him.

Meanwhile Gustavus had galloped off to his right wing, which had been so gloriously victorious over Pappenheim's cavalry, and had sent from there several brigades of cavalry right across the front of the battle, charging at a furious gallop against the flank of Tilly's regiments. Then, gathering the rest of the cavalry on the victorious right, Gustavus swept with them up the slope to the height where were the imperial cannon, captured them in the twinkling of an eye, and turned them, too, against the flank of Tilly's army.

Big gaps appeared in the imperial ranks. At length their lines began to waver and to break. Toward night a stampede set in. Yet though thousands fell and thousands fled, nightfall found Tilly and six hundred of his veterans still standing at bay, at the edge of a little wood whither they had retreated. At last they, too, forming a ring around their chief who had been thrice wounded, bore him away, abandoning the field.



HE GAVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE VICTORY.

As soon as it was certain that the battle was won, Gustavus dismounted ; and, kneeling on the battle-field, he gave thanks to God for the victory ; and all who were near him joined earnestly in the same act.

“That night,” says the Scotchman, “we encamped upon the place of battle, the living merry and rejoicing, though without drink, at the night wake of their dead comrades and friends lying there on the ground in the bed of honor. . . . Our bonfires were made of the enemy’s ammunition wagons, and of pikes left for want of good fellows to use them. All this night our brave comrades, the Saxons, were making use of their heels in flying.”

V

THE “LION OF THE NORTH”

It was a brilliant victory that the King of Sweden had won. The Emperor had received from his “new little enemy” a crushing blow. Gustavus was now the foremost man in Europe. His name was on all tongues. “The Snow

King" he was called no longer. "The Lion of the North and the Bulwark of the Protestant Faith" was his popular title henceforth. Not only in Germany did his victory hearten the Protestants; throughout Europe they were inspired.

The Protestant princes of Germany who had before hung back, fearful to take sides with Gustavus, now made haste to pay their court to him and to press upon him their offers of assistance.

If his victory brought renewed hope to the Protestants, it spread dismay among the Catholics of Germany. Catholic cities hundreds of miles from the field of battle kept their walls well manned. Fearing that Gustavus might march toward Vienna, the Emperor's capital, the Imperialists cut down hundreds of great trees in the forests to block the way thither. In some of the churches they prayed to be "delivered from the devil and the Swedes."

When Gustavus met John George after the battle, the Elector probably expected to be severely censured for his cowardly flight or else made the victim of numerous pleasantries on the

subject. Gustavus, however, with great tact, congratulated John George upon the victory won and thanked him for having urged an immediate engagement.

John George, with his vanity thus soothed, was ready to suggest putting the crown of the Empire upon Gustavus' head. But not for this had the Swedish monarch come into Germany. Though the Emperor had received a heavy blow, he was not yet willing to grant equal toleration to both Protestants and Catholics. Gustavus had yet to free the Protestants of southwestern Germany, who were crying out to him for deliverance.

Between him and them lay the richest region of Germany, the region where the Catholics possessed so many rich bishoprics and monasteries that it was called the "Priests' Alley." Toward this region, Gustavus made his way, with his army marching through the Thuringian forest in two columns. By night, their way was lighted by blazing torches. Even before they reached the "Priests' Alley," a general flight of priests and of friars, bearing all their riches that they could carry, had begun.

Persecution of the Catholics, however, Gustavus would not allow. "I have come," he announced, "to protect the Protestants from further injustice; but all, whatever their faith, who obey the law, will be protected from injury." Wherever the Protestants' worship had ever been celebrated, it was at once restored, and whatever church property had been appropriated from the Protestants was restored to them.

Capturing all important points, and garrisoning them strongly, Gustavus proceeded down the Main and the Rhine as far as Mains, which he captured three days before Christmas. Here he decided to spend the winter. The year before he had wintered in the midst of perils and privations. Uncertainty and disappointment were his portion. Now, in "the golden city of the Rhine," he could winter in the enjoyment of abundance, and in the sunshine of the approval of Germany. All the courts of Europe sent ambassadors to his court in Mains. The arsenal which he had captured supplied great quantities of clothing and of ammunition. Food was plenty. The poor Swedish peasants had never dreamed of

such luxury. They rejoiced in white bread and wine, and ate and drank to their hearts' content.

VI

THE CROSSING OF THE LECH

While Gustavus was securing his hold upon the Main and the Rhine, Tilly had been collecting a new army for the Emperor. The principal Catholic kingdom of Germany was Bavaria, and to protect this kingdom, by the following spring, Tilly had taken a position on the outskirts of Bavaria, a position from which it was deemed that he could not be dislodged. The Danube River guarded his right flank; the Lech, a small stream in summer, but now a swollen torrent, from the melting of the winter snows, lay before his camp; another small river flowed in his rear; and the town of Rain gave protection to his left flank. Between his camp and the Lech stretched a marshy plain. Along his front, as a further protection, the general had caused heavy guns to be erected at intervals, with their batteries connected by intrenchments. Most of his army

occupied a wooded ravine. Here Tilly expected to await in safety the arrival of reënforcements before offering battle to Gustavus.

Meanwhile, Gustavus had crossed the Danube above the mouth of the Lech, and had advanced to the latter river. The Swedish king, though he could be very careful and cautious in his movements, had also the Viking's love of a bold, unexpected attack. Having carefully observed the enemy's position, he decided that it would be possible for him to cross the Lech right in the teeth of Tilly's army, and attack him in his camp. His generals advised forcing a passing farther up the Lech, and then descending upon Tilly. But time was precious, for Gustavus wished to prevent the union of Tilly's army with the heavy reënforcements he was expecting. To the many grave objections raised by his generals, Gustavus replied in the words Alexander had once used on a similar occasion: "What, have we crossed a sea and so many great rivers to be stopped now by a mere brook!" The generals determined to make the crossing.

At dawn the King was up making another

careful survey of the enemy's position from the opposite bank. As he came near one of Tilly's outposts, Gustavus shouted across to the sentry:



AT DAWN THE KING WAS UP MAKING ANOTHER SURVEY OF THE
ENEMY'S POSITION.

"Good morning, sir. Where is old Tilly?"

"Thank you, sir, he is in his quarters at Rain," answered the man. "Where is the King, comrade?"

"Oh, he's in his quarters, too," answered Gustavus.

"What! You don't mean to say he has any quarters, do you?"

“Oh, yes, indeed! He has excellent quarters. Just come over here and you shall have fine quarters,” laughed the King, as he galloped away.

Gustavus discovered a point where the bank on his side of the Lech was higher than the opposite side. Here he stationed his artillery. Under the protection of his guns, his men began that night to throw a pontoon bridge across the river. To screen the workers from the enemy's gunners, damp straw was kept burning; and under the cover of the thick smoke three hundred men were sent across to build a bridge head on the opposite shore. During the following night the bridge was completed and the sending across of the troops was begun.

Tilly had endeavored to stop these proceedings. His best troops had issued from the defile, and under cover of a wood had sought to pick off the workers on the bridge. In the main, however, the battle was a contest between the artillery of the two armies. A cannon ball at length inflicted a mortal wound upon Tilly. Another general took his place. Almost instantly he was disabled by a ball. Disheartened by the loss of their

leaders, and by the galling fire from the Swedish guns, the imperial army took refuge in their intrenched camp.

As night was falling and his men were exhausted, Gustavus made no attack then ; but he remained upon the battle-field. The next day, the party he sent to reconnoitre found that despite the strength



A MESSENGER CAME TO GUSTAVUS FROM TILLY.

of their position, the imperial army had abandoned their works and had stolen away in the night.

A messenger came to Gustavus from Tilly, asking him to allow the court surgeon of Anspach

to come to him, a request Gustavus gladly granted. But before the surgeon could reach him, the old man, the noblest of the Catholic generals, was dead.

VII

THE BATTLE OF LÜTZEN

Just about the time when Gustavus first arrived in Germany, Wallenstein, the Duke of Friedland, who had been the Emperor's commander-in-chief, had been dismissed from his position, because of the fear and dislike felt by even the Catholic princes of Germany for this upstart noble, whose greedy thirst for power threatened their own positions. Now, in their extremity, the very ones who had sought Wallenstein's removal were beseeching the Emperor to secure his aid, for he was the only man in Germany who could possibly meet Gustavus in battle with any chance of success. It was only, however, by the promise of extraordinary privileges and rewards that Ferdinand could induce Wallenstein to take the command again, so deeply had he resented his removal.

A few months after the death of Tilly, Wallenstein, with the army he had collected from outlaws of all nations, advanced into Saxony.

Foolish John George was known to be jealous of the successes of the Swedish King. The crafty Wallenstein thought that he could be brought to leave his alliance with Gustavus if he were given some sharp medicine. Accordingly Wallenstein proceeded to devastate Saxony.

Gustavus, hearing that his ally had been attacked, immediately marched northward to his assistance. As he rode through the forests of Thuringia, it seemed as if a presentiment of what lay before him was present with him, for he talked much to Oxensturn, the Chancellor of Sweden, his intimate friend, who rode before him, of his little daughter Christina who must bear the weight of his crown if he should die. He outlined for his friend the way the fatherland must be governed until Christina was of age.

Yet though they talked as they travelled, Wallenstein was amazed at the swiftness of their approach. "The Swedes came as if they had flown."

At Erfurt, the people welcomed Gustavus with cries of joy and triumph. "Think not of me," he said, as they thronged about him, "think not of me, for I am nothing but a weak and dying man. Think only of the cause."

When he came to Naumberg, the inhabitants threw themselves upon their knees before him as their deliverer. "Ah," said the King to them, "now you honor me as if I were a god, and God will surely punish me for receiving such adoration. Yet I hope that He, who knows that I take no delight in such honor, will not suffer my work to fail, whatever becomes of me."

Wallenstein encamped some ten miles from Naumberg. Not thinking that Gustavus would attack him that winter, for it was bitter cold though only November, he allowed Pappenheim to leave the main army with eight thousand troops to carry on operations elsewhere. Wallenstein himself withdrew toward Lützen, leaving five thousand men to watch the Swedes.

Scarcely two days after Pappenheim had left him, Wallenstein was astonished to hear three cannon shots, the signal which was to be given by

the troops he had left behind, in case the Swedes advanced. In frantic haste he sent after Pappenheim a messenger bearing a note which read: "The enemy is advancing. Sir, let everything else be, and hurry all your forces and artillery back to me. You must be here by to-morrow morning."

If daylight could have lasted two hours longer, Gustavus would have taken the enemy the very day of his advance from Naumberg, for Wallenstein's forces were so scattered that it was late at night before he could get his regiments together. The distance Gustavus was obliged to traverse was too great, however, for him to reach more than the outposts before night fell. The two armies spent the bitter winter night facing each other, "every regiment lying down in the same order that they had marched, with their arms with them."

"The Bride never longed for the wedding morning as the king longed for the day to break." Two hours before daylight his drums beat. Prayers were read at the head of each regiment, and as they stood to their arms, the men sang Luther's hymn, "A mighty fortress is our God."

A thick mist prevented the King from making the attack as early as he had planned, but when about ten o'clock the mist began to lift, after making a brief speech to his soldiers, he led the attack, waving his sword above his head and crying, "Forward in God's name."

For more than nine hours the battle raged wildly and fiercely upon the plains of Lützen. A little after noon Pappenheim arrived with the foremost of his cuirassiers. "Where is the King commanding?" demanded the fiery officer as he galloped on to the field. But before he met Gustavus, Pappenheim had fallen, mortally wounded.

Meanwhile, word came to Gustavus that one part of his line was wavering. Putting himself at the head of one of his choicest cavalry squadrons, he galloped off to its succor. Always Gustavus exposed himself without any consideration of his personal danger. Now, he was at the head of his men, and he galloped so fast that, with only a German noble and his page, he was shut out from the view of his troops by a descending wreath of mist. So, too, he was hidden from some advancing horsemen of the enemy. A

pistol shot struck the great white horse he rode. Another shot crippled the King's bridle arm. His horse began to plunge. The King felt himself growing faint. "Cousin," said he to the nobleman, "I am sore hurt; help me from the battle."

As they wheeled, a ball hit the King in the back and he fell from his horse. The nobleman galloped away with his life; but the page, a youth of eighteen, remained.

The horsemen rode up. "Who are you?" they asked of the dying King.

The page would not answer, but Gustavus replied, "I am the King of Sweden, who do seal with my blood the Religion and the Liberty of the German nation."

The horsemen thrust their swords again and again into the breast of the fallen man, and fatally wounded the faithful page. Then, before the first of the cavalry squadron which was following the King could arrive, they rode away.

The noble white horse of Gustavus, stained with the King's red blood, was the first to carry the news of his master's death to the Swedish army, as he madly galloped, riderless, along the lines.

That sight roused the Swedes to the frenzy of despairing love. They would avenge their beloved leader. Closing up their ranks, they advanced against the enemy. They recovered the body of their King. They swept the imperial lines back and were carrying all before them when the arrival of the last squadron of Pappenheim's cavalry turned the current backward. The Saxons, too, had lost a gallant leader, whose death they thirsted to avenge. Slowly the Swedes were pushed back over the field they had just won. Was the battle lost?

At length the Swedes stood. Their decimated ranks closed up. Shoulder to shoulder they pushed forward again with a power born of despair. There was nowhere any faltering, nowhere any gap. In all their brave battles there had been no advance like that. The soul of their dead hero led them on, on, resistlessly in the misty dusk of evening. Nothing could stop them. The imperial ranks grappled with them, wavered, broke, fled, — everywhere fled.

The Swedes remained that night upon the field of battle. The body of their King was carried

to a little village in the rear of their lines, and laid before the altar of the small village church. Within the church, the band of cavalry which had recovered the King's body sat in silence in full armor upon their horses, while the village schoolmaster read the service for the dead. Then the schoolmaster, who was also the carpenter of the village, made a rude wooden coffin, in which the body was placed and carried the next day under military escort to a large town to be embalmed. The next summer Sweden received and laid to rest in a church in Stockholm the earthly remains of her hero King. There, watched over by the tattered banners, which recall his many victories, his body lies in a marble sarcophagus.

Thus, in his prime, Gustavus Adolphus died a glorious death. But his work was not lost. The weary war dragged on, but when at last peace was made, Gustavus and his high aims were not forgotten, and those precious things for which he had given his life were won ; for by the peace, toleration was secured in Germany for both Catholics and Protestants.

PETER THE GREAT

WHEN A CZAR BECAME A BOAT-BUILDER

ON a Sunday morning in August, in the year 1697, there was a stir of excitement and of curiosity in the little Dutch town of Zaandam. Word passed from lip to lip that early in the morning, when most of the townspeople were still asleep in their beds, some mysterious strangers had arrived in the town. The few early risers who had been fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of the strangers were plied with questions by their curious neighbors. One group of people, constantly growing larger, was gathered before the Otter Inn, where the visitors were said to have taken lodgings. The centre of this group was an honest Dutchman who, fishing peacefully in the early morning, had seen the strangers sailing by him.

Of him his neighbors were asking for the twentieth time, "How did they look?"

For the twentieth time he answered: "Like no men I have ever seen. They were uncommonly tall and dark skinned and most of them had great black beards."

"What did they wear?"

"Outlandish clothes," was the answer. "Nearly all of them wore gowns that reached to their ankles."

"How many of them were there?"

"A dozen." Then, unsolicited, the Dutchman ventured a further bit of information. "Gerrit Gist had speech with them."

"What! How's that?"

"Well, you see Gerrit was fishing on the river, too, and I was not so far away but that I could see what happened. Along came these foreigners, and one of them, a young man, stood up in the boat and shouted to Gerrit. The young man was a giant. He had no beard, and he was so dark you'd think he was born in Africa. They stopped and talked with Gerrit a good bit. It appeared to me Gerrit knew them."

"I'll stake my life they are Russians, then," exclaimed one of the group. "Gerrit most likely

knew them those years he was in Russia. He has told me many a time that the men of that country wear gowns that reach to the ground."

"There they are now! There they are now!" whispered the people, excitedly; and for a few moments their eyes were too busy gazing to allow their tongues to gossip. On the steps of the inn had appeared the very men whom they had been discussing. Now, however, the swarthy-skinned, black-haired foreigners were no longer clad in their "outlandish clothes" which "reached to their ankles." Instead they wore the dress most familiar to the men of Zaandam, the red waistcoat with big buttons, the wide breeches, the short jacket, and the wide tarpaulin hat which was the customary dress of the Dutch boatmen. The worthy citizens of Zaandam gazed open-mouthed, while the strangers cast curious glances at them and up and down the street. The fisherman who had seen the visitors early in the day was the first to find his tongue.

"It was he who spoke to Gerrit," he volunteered importantly, indicating with his forefinger a broad-shouldered young man nearly seven feet

in height, who was the centre of the group on the inn steps. Even before the Dutchman spoke all eyes had been focussed upon this young man. His open countenance and piercing black eyes suggested a keen and restless intellect. In his bearing was something haughty and imperious.

After a comprehensive glance about, the young man and his comrades passed down the street, the Dutchman following at their heels. It was Sunday, and what else was there to do but to see those strange visitors, the like of whom had never before been seen in the streets of Zaandam? The throng of citizens in the wake of the strangers kept growing, while the windows were full of curious faces. The watchers observed that, as the young giant talked to his comrades, he frequently made queer grimaces and threw out his right arm in strange gesticulations.

Now a strange rumor was tossed about. "The Czar of Muscovy is one of those men."

"The Czar of Muscovy! Impossible!" each exclaimed as the rumor reached him, yet still the rumor spread. Well might they be incredulous, for in more than six hundred years no Czar of Russia

had ever been seen outside his kingdom. To the people of Zaandam, indeed, the Czar of all the Russias was a being remote and mysterious.

At length, to the oft-repeated question, "What are they here for?" another rumor suggested an answer. "They have come to learn how to build ships."

"Did Gerrit Gist say so?" asked one.

"No," was the reply. "Gerrit still fishes in the river and will tell nought save that he admits that the men are Russians and that he was acquainted with them when he was in Moscow."

Meanwhile the mysterious visitors were fanning to white heat the flames of curiosity they had kindled in quiet Zaandam by their eccentric behavior. Led by the young giant, they not only went into all the shipyards and the churches, but even entered unceremoniously into private dwellings and gazed about, to the great astonishment of the householders.

One hut in the poorer section of the town, where the artisans dwelt, especially pleased the young Russian we have noticed. "This I will have," he said. As he smiled with satisfaction,

who should enter but Gerrit Gist whose home it chanced to be !

“Yes, the house is yours,” replied Gerrit, as the Russian repeated his exclamation, “but first it must be made ready. To-morrow you shall have it.”



“KEEP WELL OUR SECRET.”

Then saying to Gerrit, “Keep well our secret,” the Russians passed on.

At length they came into the shop of the barber, Pomp. Now a certain man of Zaandam had a son then living in Moscow, from whom he had received but lately a letter ; this letter Pomp had

chanced to see. It told of a great embassy that had left Russia to visit the leading countries of Europe. It further declared that Peter, the Czar of Russia, was with the embassy, though he travelled as a private gentleman. "He may even come to Zaandam," the letter said, "and you can easily recognize the Czar for he is 'tall with a face that twitches, a right arm that is never quiet and a mole on one cheek.'"

When, then, the strangers entered his shop, Pomp quickly identified the young giant as the one described in the letter. Even the mole was there. As soon as the Russians departed, Pomp spread the news about.

Naturally, every inhabitant of Zaandam wished to see the Czar of Russia, and the crowd of curious Dutchmen grew to such proportions that it was too embarrassing to the visitors. The hot blood mounted to the brow of the young giant as the people dodged his footsteps. "Too many people," he exclaimed. "Too many people!" And without more ado he took refuge in the Otter Inn, nor would he be persuaded to appear in public again that day.

Nevertheless, bright and early the next morning, he registered as a ship-carpenter at the wharf of one of the chief ship-builders of the town, under the name of Peter Mihailof. The seal used by Peter represented a young carpenter with his shipwright's tools about him, with the inscription, "My rank is that of a scholar, and I need masters."

How did it happen that the Czar of all the Russias had come to quiet Zaandam to become a pupil in the art of ship-building?

Even in his childhood Peter had been interested in foreigners. The foreign quarter of Moscow was the part of the city where he best liked to spend his time. The bitter prejudice against foreigners which his people cherished was utterly lacking in him. He early discovered that Europeans could teach him many things about which the Russians knew nothing. Above all, he found that they, alone, could teach him the art of ship-building.

From a day in his childhood when he discovered in an old shed where rubbish was stored the half-rotten hulk of an English boat which had

belonged to a great uncle of his, ship-building had been his most absorbing interest. It was a Dutchman who told him the use of the old hulk and who likewise told him the astonishing fact that it could be furnished with sails that would make it possible for it to sail against the wind. It was a Dutchman who, after he had calked the hulk and had fitted it with a mast and sails, sailed up and down on a neighboring pond, turning it this way and that, to Peter's immense delight and excitement, and who had then taught the boy how to manage the craft.

With reason, this old boat is called the Grandfather of the Russian Navy, for from its discovery dated Peter's passionate interest in ship-building and his determination to build for Russia a navy, and to win for her outlets upon the great seas whereon her ships might sail; for when Peter was a boy, Russia had no outlet by sea except at the frozen north.

As Peter grew older, he sent men to foreign countries to learn the art of ship-building. Not satisfied with this, he determined to go himself. It had chanced that of the carpenters he had

employed in Russia the most had been natives of Zaandam. For this reason, the young Czar resolved that Zaandam was the place where he would go to learn the art he loved.

It would be irksome to travel as the ruler of a great kingdom, so Peter decided to travel in disguise. A great embassy left Russia to visit the countries of Europe to make treaties of friendship. One of the men in the train of the ambassadors was a certain Peter Mihailof. When the embassy arrived in Amsterdam, Peter, without stopping, hurried on with a few friends to Zaandam. We have seen how quickly the secret of his identity was guessed in that quiet little town.

Though the Czar so promptly entered himself as a ship-carpenter, it is doubtful if he learned much of the craft in Zaandam, for he remained there only a week; and during that time he was very much occupied with other things.

Having established himself in the humble hut of Gerrit Gist, Peter bought himself a small yacht. With his own hands, he fitted this with a mast and sails and forthwith he spent much of his time in sailing about. He visited, too, all

the mills and factories in the neighborhood, studying especially the construction of the wind-mills which furnished the power for sawing the lumber for the ships.

Meanwhile Peter was disappointed in finding that the boats built in Zaandam were all small merchant vessels. Now, too, he learned that in Amsterdam the ship-building was of far better quality and importance. Besides, he was greatly annoyed by the furor of curiosity which his presence aroused in the quiet village. When a rumor of his presence in the little town reached Amsterdam, crowds of people flocked from that city to Zaandam to get a glimpse of him. Their attentions frequently roused the young giant to wrath.

One day, having bought a hatful of plums in the market place, he was strolling along eating them when he came upon a crowd of boys. With some of the youngsters Peter shared his plums while he taunted those to whom he had given none. It was too much for boy nature to stand; forthwith they took up stones and mud and threw them at Peter. Then the young giant

forgot the part he was to play and shouted in his wrath, "I am the Czar of Russia! I am the Czar of Russia!" But the boys had no notion of stopping their mud throwing because a dark-skinned giant in a Dutch sailor costume loudly proclaimed his rank to them. Indeed, as Peter was very angry and excited, it is quite likely that he shouted in Russian, a language which the boys understood not at all. At any rate he was obliged to take refuge in the nearest inn. From there he sent for the Burgomaster of the town, to whom he must have admitted some important facts about himself; for, after their conversation together, the Burgomaster gave orders to the townspeople that no insults were to be offered to any distinguished personage in the town who wished to remain unknown.

Yet still the people thronged about him. When he sailed in his yacht, they lined the banks or sailed as near him as possible to watch him. At length, in a rage, Peter leaped ashore and cuffed soundly one of the spectators, to the immense delight of the other onlookers, who shouted, "Bravo! Bravo! Marsje, you are made a knight."

Peter sulked off to his cottage and shut himself in.

On Sunday it seemed as if all Amsterdam had come to the town to see him. Peter refused to leave his house, except, finally, to hurry to his yacht. A storm was raging, and he was warned of the danger, but better shipwreck than the gaping, curious crowd, thought he, so he set sail and three hours later arrived in Amsterdam.

Having made the acquaintance of the Burgo-master of Amsterdam, Peter requested him to obtain permission from the East India Company for him to be admitted to that company's ship-building yards so that he might work undisturbed by public curiosity. This permission the company readily granted; and as a token of respect they began immediately the building of a frigate so that the Czar might see the whole process from beginning to end.

Now Peter's serious work began. The company assigned him a small house within the yards so that he might live entirely in peace. Here the Czar of Russia cooked his own meals, made his own bed, and mended his own clothes. He

dressed in the same fashion as the Dutch carpenters and insisted upon being treated exactly the same as they were. If he were addressed as "Sire" or "Your Majesty," Peter was stone deaf, but if he was addressed as "Master Peter" or "Carpenter Peter of Zaandam," he was quite ready to sit and chat during his leisure moments.

One day two noblemen visited the yards, hoping to see the Czar. To point him out, the master carpenter called, "Carpenter Peter of Zaansdam, why don't you help your fellows?" Without a word, Peter put his shoulder under the timber some of the men were lifting, and hoisted it with them to its proper place.

In his hours of recreation, the young monarch found time to do many things. Besides spending hours over the study of geometry, he visited shops, theatres, hospitals, museums, and factories. People soon came to recognize him by his oft-repeated eager exclamations, "What is that?" "How does it work?" "That I must see." One day he nearly lost an arm by suddenly stopping a sawmill; at another time he barely escaped losing his life by seizing the driving wheel in a silk factory.

His curiosity was insatiable. He discussed architecture with a famous architect; he studied drawing and learned to engrave on copper; he learned to cobble well enough to make himself a pair of shoes; he learned to use the compass and the sword as well as the plane, and he even took lessons of a travelling dentist whom he came across in one of the public squares. Thereafter it was a sure way to Peter's favor to ask him to extract a tooth.

To second him in his self-appointed task of opening the windows of Russia toward Europe, the Czar collected a corps of men, naval officers, physicians, gunsmiths, engineers, miners, and even four cooks. He found time to gather and despatch to Moscow no less than two hundred and sixty cases of the supplies that these men would need in their work. Indeed he did a prodigious amount of labor in the four months he spent in Holland. Meanwhile, he did not neglect the beer shops in the evenings, and he became intimately acquainted with the Dutch home life. Peter took a few days from his work to go to the Hague to witness the festivities when

his embassy was received there in royal state. On the road thither, Peter stopped his carriage no less than twenty times. Once it was to measure the width of a bridge; again it was to visit a mill, to reach which it was necessary for him to cross a meadow where the water reached often to his knees.

When he reached the Hague and was shown to the fine apartment reserved for him in the best hotel in the city, he would none of it. Instead he climbed to the tiny chambers under the roof. Even here he found nothing to suit him. Leaving the hotel, he went to a modest inn, where he found a servant of his already asleep on a bearskin in the corner. "Give me thy place," said Peter, rousing the man to his feet with a kick.

Just as he was ill at ease in elegant surroundings, so, too, he was shy and embarrassed when he came into contact with people more refined and civilized than himself. Though this young giant of twenty-five was still in many respects a barbarian, his intelligence was too keen to permit him to be unconscious of his lack. Peter refused to be present at the reception of his embassy, but he



"GIVE ME THY PLACE," SAID PETER.

watched it from an adjoining room. During the progress of the affair, some people came into the apartment where he was. Immediately Peter wished to leave the room, but when he learned that in order to do so he must pass through the room where the dignitaries were assembled, he requested that they all should turn their backs as he passed through.

Manifestly, Peter was more at ease in the ship-yards of the East India Company than in assemblies of dignitaries. Thither he returned and continued to toil there until the frigate in whose entire construction he had shared was completed and launched, and Peter Mihailof received from his master a certificate bearing witness to his progress.

While Peter was in Holland, an Englishman had boasted to him that, in certain respects, the English surpassed the Dutch in their knowledge of ship-building. As the young monarch was not fully satisfied with what he had learned in Amsterdam, he was eager to prove the truth of the Englishman's boast. Moreover, the Czar admired William III, the King of England, and

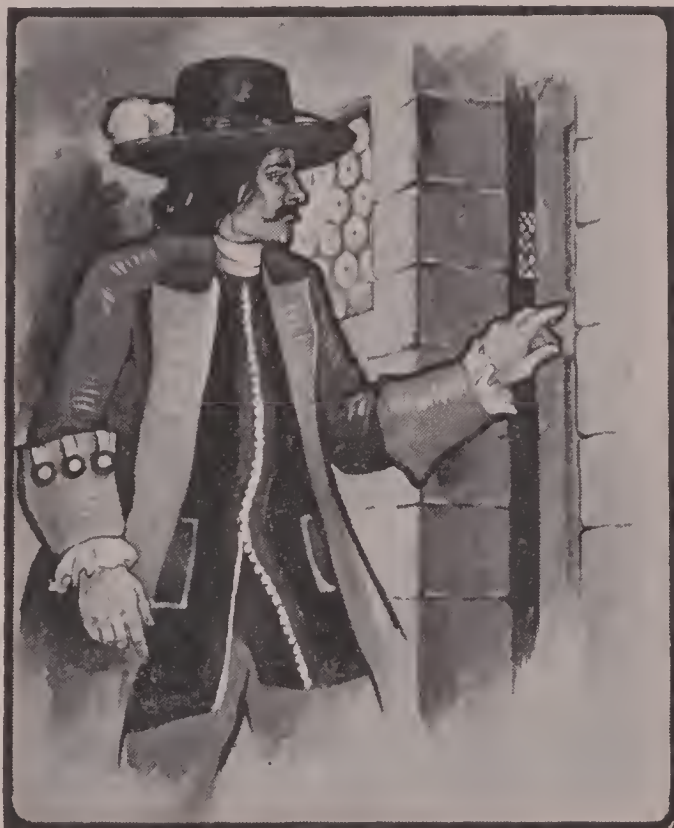
that monarch had but lately shown his good-will toward the young Czar by sending him as a gift his own finest yacht, a new ship of perfect construction, armed with twenty brass cannon. No other gift could have given Peter greater pleasure.

The envoy he sent to convey his thanks to William bore also a request that Peter might be allowed to visit England and to study the English ship-building. The response of the English monarch was most cordial, and ships were sent to convey the Russian to England. Soon all London was agog to see the wonderful young man who, though ruler over the widest domain at that time under the sway of one man, had come to them as a learner. Peter, however, was as shy as ever, and the King humored his wish to avoid public functions by coming to call upon him privately.

The Czar received the King in his shirt sleeves, in the small room he had selected as his bedroom. In this room slept also four or five other Russians. The air was so villainous that the King nearly fainted when he entered, and all the windows had to be thrown open though the day was bitter cold. When Peter returned the King's call, he

entered the royal palace by a back door. It was noticed that the Czar paid no attention to the beautiful paintings the palace contained, but he was most enthusiastic over a clever contrivance for showing which way the wind blew.

After spending some time in seeing the sights of London, Peter settled down in Deptford, a village then on the outskirts of the city, where he put in six weeks



HE ENTERED THE ROYAL PALACE BY A
BACK DOOR.

of hard work in the ship-yards. He walked the streets in sailor costume, with his hatchet over his shoulder and a small Dutch pipe in his mouth.

The tavern where he smoked and drank his beer was long known as the "Czar's Tavern,"

and the street leading to the house where he lived is called "Czar's Lane" to this day. The house he occupied had been hired for his use by King William of John Evelyn, an English gentleman. Mr. Evelyn found cause to complain bitterly of his uncouth tenants. The beautiful holly hedge, of which he was so proud, was completely ruined by Peter, who amused himself by pushing through it a wheelbarrow. Nor did the house fare better. Mr. Evelyn's servant wrote to his master: "There is a house full of people and right nasty. The King is expected here to-day. The best parlor is pretty clean for him to be entertained in." Of the visit the servant wrote: "The Czar had a favorite monkey which sat down upon the back of his chair. As soon as the King was set down, the monkey jumped upon him in some wrath, which discomposed the whole ceremonial."

As in Holland, though naval affairs were his most absorbing interest, his activities extended in countless other directions. He was present at a meeting of Parliament when King William gave his assent to a land tax. Peter was so anxious

to avoid having his presence known that he watched the proceedings through a hole in the ceiling, whereat some one said, "I have seen the



HE WATCHED THE PROCEEDINGS THROUGH A HOLE IN THE CEILING.

rarest thing in the world, a King on the throne, and an Emperor on the roof."

It is reported that Peter, having heard the debate, remarked, "It is pleasant to hear how the sons of the fatherland tell the truth plainly to the King; we must learn that from the English."

In his farewell interview with the King, Peter

drew from his pocket and handed to the King a small twisted piece of soiled brown paper. The King, wondering, opened it to find a magnificent uncut diamond of great size. Thus Czar Peter expressed his gratitude for the splendid yacht the King had given him and for the kindly reception he had met in England.

From England Peter planned to go to Venice to learn the construction of the galley, the ship that was much used on the Mediterranean. He had even started on his way there when affairs in Russia made necessary his return to his kingdom.

Accordingly, Czar Peter returned to his people, and devoted his life to the task he had appointed himself, — the task of expanding Russia and of introducing European civilization into his empire. In later years, when his achievements had made his name known and even feared throughout Europe, he made other journeys into Europe, but of them all not one had such momentous results for Russia as that first journey when he visited the advanced countries of western Europe, a pupil with his motto, "My rank is that of a scholar, and I need masters."

MAHOMET THE PROPHET

I

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

IN the shade cast by the Kaaba, the holy temple of the Arabs in Mecca, an aged chief reclined upon a rug. His hoary head and beard, and his majestic though benign appear-



AN AGED CHIEF RECLINED UPON A RUG.

"

ance, seemed cause enough for the reverent greetings bestowed upon him by all who passed by.

About his carpet, at a respectful distance, his sons sat in silence. Suddenly a childish shout of greeting broke the stillness, and a black-eyed boy of about five years of age darted into the group. The little one seemed to regard the rug on which the aged chief lay as specially designed for himself, and straightway curled himself up on it without so much as asking leave, prattling the while to the old man.

The sons of the patriarch, disturbed by the unceremonious behavior of the child, tried to drive him away, but the old man stopped them.

“Let my little son alone,” he said. “Let my little son alone.”

The little one nestled close to the old man, who stroked him lovingly, listened with delight to his childish talk, and made no sign of displeasure, even when the child’s fingers played with his long white beard.

Now the aged patriarch was Abd al Muttalib, Chief of the House of Hashim, leading man of Mecca, and guardian of the Kaaba and its sacred worship. He it was that gave food and drink to all pilgrims who came to Mecca. And the

child whom he loved was Mahomet, his orphan grandson.

The old man sighed as he thought of the boy's father, Abdallah, fairest and noblest of all Arab youths, his own best beloved son, who died before ever Mahomet could call him father.

As the child prattled on, Abd al Muttalib be-thought him of all that had happened since Abdallah's death. There were the years when the child had been away from Mecca in the care of a woman of a Bedouin tribe of Arabs in the desert. This was wise, for the air of Mecca was bad for children, but the air of the desert was pure and life-giving. Yes, it was wise for the child to grow strong in the desert, but his mother, Amina, had missed her little one sorely. When he came back to her, handsome and well, how proud she was! She must show him to all her family. Hence came the ill-fated journey to Medina, where dwelt some of her kin and where, too, was Abdallah's grave.

He recalled the day when on their two camels they set forth from Mecca, Amina, Mahomet, and their slave girl Omm Ayman.



ONE DAY OMM AYMAN AND THE LITTLE MAHOMET APPEARED AT
ABD AL MUTTALIB'S DOOR.

All went well until the homeward journey, when Amina sickened and died. One day Omm Ayman and the little Mahomet, now an orphan, had appeared at Abd al Muttalib's door, travel-worn and weeping. He welcomed them into his home; and ever since he had cherished the child with the tenderest love.

Mahomet was still under the care of his nurse, but often he would run away from her to seek his grandfather. It mattered not whether the old man was asleep or awake, alone or attended by a crowd, the child went to him fearlessly and never was repulsed.

Of all this the old man mused as they rested together in the shade of the Kaaba, watched over by the idols. After a time the child's voice died away and he slept; soon the old man, too, was sleeping, and all who passed by were careful not to waken them.

For only two years was Mahomet watched over by Abd al Muttalib, however, for at the age of fourscore and two the old man died. The child followed his bier weeping and grieved bitterly over the loss of his grandfather. The death of

his kindly guardian following so closely upon that of his loved mother tended to make him pensive and thoughtful.

On his deathbed, Abd al Muttalib had consigned the child to the care of his son, Abu Tâlib, who, though poor, was a man of noble character. Faithfully he fulfilled the trust thus confided to him. Indeed, the uncle's love of the child equalled that of the grandfather. Whenever Abu Tâlib walked abroad, he took Mahomet with him; he made him eat at his table, and sleep by his bed. Indeed there was something unusually appealing about this deeply affectionate and beautiful child.

When Mahomet was twelve years of age, Abu Tâlib planned to go to Syria with a caravan of merchandise. He intended to leave Mahomet at home, for the boy was now old enough to take care of himself. But when the caravan was ready to depart, and Abu Tâlib was about to mount his camel, Mahomet clung to him sobbing, quite overcome by the prospect of such a long separation from his loved guardian. Abu Tâlib was so touched by the child's grief, that he placed

him on his own camel, and cared for him throughout the expedition which lasted several months.

As Mahomet grew older, he was sometimes sent, like other lads, to tend the sheep and goats upon the hills and in the valleys about Mecca. Mahomet liked this task, for the silence and solitude gave him opportunity to meditate upon the many questions which were beginning to fill his mind.

In the loneliness of the desert, there were many signs of an unseen Power. There were the sweet blackberries that gave zest to his frugal meals; there were the sparkling stars that blazed in the clear night sky; there were the wild thunderstorms that swept in awful grandeur through the great solitudes. All spoke to him eloquently of an ever present Being.

But when he returned to Mecca, there were the three hundred and sixty idols ranged about the Kaaba. There was the great idol Hobal within the sacred shrine. Every year he saw thousands of pilgrims come thither in the sacred months to worship these idols and to kiss the Black Stone which was placed in one corner of the Kaaba, —

the mysterious Black Stone which the angel Gabriel had brought down from heaven. It was white, said tradition, when Gabriel first brought it to men, but the kisses of so many sinful men had turned it black. Some vague knowledge of the Jews and of the Christians had also come to Mahomet. No wonder, then, that he asked: "What is the true God? What is truth?"

When Mahomet was twenty-five years of age, he entered the service of Khadijah, a wealthy widow much older than himself. She was so captivated by his noble appearance and charming manners that love took possession of her heart; and though she had refused many wealthy and honorable suitors, she offered her hand to the penniless Mahomet. Despite the difference in their ages, the marriage which followed was a very happy one.

II

THE CALL

As Mahomet grew older, the questionings of his mind grew more and more troubled. It burdened his soul to see his people sunk in super-

stition, idolatry, and vice. Thus weighed down, he often left Mecca and wandered in the desert region thereabout, seeking relief in silent meditation. His favorite retreat was a cave on Mount Hira. All about was bleak and rugged; there



HIS FAVORITE RETREAT WAS A CAVE ON MOUNT HIRA.

was not a green spot in sight. There he would often remain for days at a time. Sometimes his faithful wife attended him, and sought to relieve the trouble of his mind by her loving sympathy.

Light struggled with darkness in his soul. At last truth burst upon him. It happened in this way.

As he lay on the ground of the cave, one day, in great distress of mind, a heavenly light flooded the place, and framed in the light he beheld a glorious angel in human form, holding out to Mahomet a shining roll.

“Read,” said the Angel.

“I cannot read,” replied Mahomet.

“Read,” repeated the Angel.

Again Mahomet answered, “I cannot read.”

“Read,” said the Angel. “In the name of the Lord who created man, in the name of the Most High who taught man the use of the pen, and teaches him what before he knew not.”

Upon this Mahomet read the decrees of God which later he gave forth in the Koran.

Then Mahomet was fearful lest the vision was sent by the Devil, but the Angel banished the doubt, saying :

“O Mahomet, of a truth thou art the prophet of God and I am his angel Gabriel !”

Then the vision disappeared ; and Mahomet hastened home, pallid and trembling, and told Khadijah all that had happened.

“O Khadijah,” he exclaimed, “I have always

hated and despised both idols and soothsayers, and now verily I fear that I shall become a soothsayer myself."

"Fear not," Khadijah answered him. "Glad tidings thou dost bring. Henceforth I will regard thee as the Prophet of our nation. God will not suffer thee to come to shame, for thou hast ever been loving to thy kinsfolk, charitable to the poor, faithful to thy word, and a defender of the truth."

"So Khadijah believed," runs the ancient tradition, "and attested the truth of that which came to him from God. Thus was the Lord minded to lighten the burden of his Prophet; for he heard nothing that grieved him touching his rejection by the people, but he had recourse unto her, and she comforted, reassured, and supported him."

III

THE YEARS OF PERSECUTION

Accepting his mission, Mahomet began to teach: "There is no God but the God, and Mahomet is His Prophet." This was the simple creed of the new faith he taught.

A little knot of faithful followers soon joined themselves to him, among them his lifelong devoted friend, Abu Bekr. But while a few believed, most people scoffed. As he passed by the groups of people who were wont to gather near the Kaaba to talk over the events of the day, they would point at him in disdainful scorn. "Behold the dreamer!" some would say, or "There goeth the fellow from among the children of Abd al Muttalib to speak unto the people about the Heavens." Still others declared that he was in league with evil spirits. Even his kind and generous uncle, Abu Tâlib, smiled at his nephew's enthusiasm.

As the number of Mahomet's converts increased and there were added to them some influential citizens, the disdain of the Coreish, or nobility of Mecca, changed to alarm and even to open hostility. They resolved that this fellow who abused their idols and who said that their ancestors were in perdition must be stopped. If the idol worship should be done away with, a great source of their income would be cut off.

For such reasons, persecution began. They

dared not touch Mahomet himself, for Abu Tâlib, though he clung to the worship of the idols of the Kaaba, nevertheless declared that while he lived nobody should dare to molest his nephew. The brunt of the anger of the Coreish fell upon the weak and poor followers of Mahomet, who had no powerful patron or protector, especially upon the slaves.

Some of these were imprisoned; others were tied to stakes in the burning desert, exposed to the intense glare of the midday sun on the scorching sand of the valley. The miserable wretches, tormented by agonies of thirst, scarcely knew what they said. If, under this torture, they recanted, acknowledging the idols of Mecca and reviling Mahomet, they were revived by draughts of water and taken to their homes.

The slave Bilâh alone escaped the shame of recantation. His tormentors could ring from him even in the depths of his anguish but the one confession, "One, One — One — Only one God!" Abu Bekr, Mahomet's friend, passing by, saved the slave by purchasing his freedom.

Mahomet showed much pity toward these

unhappy sufferers. He even allowed them to appear to recant so that they might escape torment. Chancing to pass by one poor fellow who had recanted under torture, and seeing him sobbing, Mahomet asked :

“What ails thee, O Ammûr?”

“Evil; O Prophet! They would not let me go until I had abused thee, and spoken well of their gods.”

“But how dost thou find thine own heart?”

“Secure and steadfast in the faith.”

“Then,” replied Mahomet, “if they repeat their cruelty, repeat thou also thy words.”

To escape persecution, Mahomet urged such as had no protector to seek refuge in a foreign land. It happened that more than a hundred departed to Abyssinia, where they were kindly received by the Christian king of that land.

The departure of these converts only increased the wrath of the Coreish. They sent a committee of elders to Abu Tâlib, asking him either to suppress Mahomet himself or to hand him over to them.

Abu Tâlib answered them gently and courteously, yet sent them away without granting

their request. Again they came to him, as their anger waxed ever hotter, saying :

“As we have told thee before, this nephew of thine speaketh slightingly of our gods and hath unbraided us as fools. And now verily we cannot any longer have patience with his abuse of us, our ancestors, and our gods. Now therefore either restrain him, or our quarrel shall be against thee as well as against him.”

Having thus spoken, they departed.

It seemed a grievous thing to Abu Tâlib, who was now an aged man, to be at enmity with the men of Mecca, yet at the same time he could not bear to surrender Mahomet to their will. Being thus troubled in mind, he sent for Mahomet and told him of the saying of the Coreish. “And now,” said he, earnestly, “save thyself and me also. Cast not upon me a burden heavier than I can bear.”

Mahomet was alarmed, for he thought that his uncle had resolved to abandon him. But his courage did not fail.

“If they should bring the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left to force me from my undertaking, verily I would not renounce my

purpose so long as God commanded me to go on, even if I were to perish in the attempt."

Yet the thought of being deserted by the man who had been his kind protector from childhood overcame him, and he burst into tears as he turned to depart. The aged chief was also moved.

"Son of my brother," he cried, "come back. And now depart in peace and say whatsoever thou wilt. For, by the Lord of the Kaaba, I will in no wise give thee up forever."

Then all the Coreish who were not of the House of Hashim made a vow that they would sell nothing to those of the House of Hashim nor buy anything from them, nor have any dealings whatsoever with them. Their vows were written upon a piece of parchment and hung up in the Kaaba.

Then Mahomet and his followers and all the members of the Tribe of Hashim, save Abu Lahab who hated the new religion, withdrew to the Quarter of Abu Tâlib. There they were blockaded for two or three years. Only in the sacred months, when according to the law of the Arabs all feuds are in abeyance and war is forbidden, did they dare to venture forth.

Yet many of the citizens when they heard the crying of hungry children within the besieged quarter were moved to pity and now and then corn and provisions were smuggled into the Quarter of Abu Tâlib at night by relatives of the House of Hashim. Yet even so there was great want and suffering among those thus isolated.

Now when two or three years had passed, one who was friendly to Mahomet brought word to Abu Tâlib that ants had destroyed the parchment on which the vow of the Coreish had been written.

Then the venerable chief marched forth to the Kaaba with a band of followers. Thus spake he to the men assembled there:

“Knowledge has come to me that the parchment whereon the Coreish wrote their vows against the House of Hashim has been eaten by ants. If this be true, cease your evil designs against us; if false, I will deliver my brother’s son to you.”

The company, incredulous, agreed that it should be as Abu Tâlib had said, and straightway the parchment was brought forth. Then were

the Coreish in confusion of mind, for in truth the parchment had been so destroyed by white ants that not a word of it could be read.

Then Abu Tâlib upbraided the Coreish for their hardness of heart, and advancing to the Kaaba, he withdrew behind the curtain which covered the house and prayed to the Lord of the Kaaba for deliverance. Then straightway he retired to his house.

Up rose certain men of Mecca who had liked not the ban which had been placed upon their fellow citizens; and having spoken their minds, they put on their armor and went to the Quarter of Abu Tâlib and commanded all who had taken refuge there to go forth to their respective homes in peace and security.

There followed a few months of liberty and repose. But it was broken abruptly by the death of two faithful friends of the Prophet, his wife, Khadijah, and his venerable uncle, Abu Tâlib. Cut off from the powerful protection of the latter, accusation and insult were now heaped upon Mahomet as nobody had dared do while his uncle was alive. At one time the populace cast dirt

upon his head. When he returned home in this plight, one of his daughters rose to wipe it off, and as she did so, wept. But Mahomet comforted her, saying :

“My daughter, weep not ! for verily the Lord will be thy father’s helper.”

The people of Mecca were so bitter against him, and the number of his converts grew so slowly, that within two weeks after the death of Abu Tâlib, Mahomet decided to go to Tayif, a city some seventy miles east of Mecca, to see if perchance God might turn the hearts of that people from the worship of idols to Himself.

With only one companion, the Prophet set forth from Mecca to summon Tayif to repentance. At first his way led through barren regions, but as he neared Tayif he passed along fertile valleys green with vineyards and gardens. The beauty of the scene seemed to Mahomet an augury of better things to come, but his hopes were soon cruelly dashed.

“If then thou art a Prophet, why do not the people of thine own city believe in thee ?” taunted the men of Tayif.

To hasten his departure from their midst, the people hooted him through the streets, pelted him with stones, and obliged him to flee from the city for his life. The relentless rabble did not cease from the chase until they had pursued him, bleeding from his wounds, several miles from the city. His companion sought to shield him from the stones, but was himself badly wounded.

When the men of Tayif were satisfied that they were well rid of their troublesome visitor, they ceased from the chase and returned to their homes. Mahomet, exhausted and mortified, crept into an orchard, and rested there under a vine, lifting his heart in touching petitions to God.

In this hour of humiliation he little dreamed, despite his intense faith in his mission, that the time would come when countless millions would hold him in supreme honor and would give to him and to his teaching their absolute allegiance. Still less did he dream that the day would come when mighty empires would tremble at his name.

IV

THE FLIGHT

Certain men of Medina, having talked with Mahomet in his city at the time of the pilgrimage, believed his teaching and confessed, "The Lord our God is one God, and Mahomet is His Prophet." Returning to their city, these converts spread his teaching, and the number of believers increased rapidly, until they became the strongest power in Medina. Then they sent to Mecca an urgent invitation to Mahomet and all his followers to take refuge in their city, pledging themselves to protect him even as they protected their own wives and children.

Then Mahomet commanded his followers, saying, "Depart unto Medina, for God hath verily given unto you brethren in that city, and a home in which ye may find refuge."

According to his instructions, they made their preparations and set out in companies, secretly. Those who had the means rode two and two upon camels; the rest walked, even though Medina was two hundred and fifty miles distant.

The Coreish looked on in amazement as family after family silently disappeared. Within two months all the Believers save Mahomet and his devoted friend Abu Bekr had stolen away, in number about one hundred and fifty.

Then the wrath of the Coreish was hot against Mahomet, and one night they sent forth men to his house to capture him. Mahomet, apprised of their coming, escaped by a secret way, and joining Abu Bekr, fled with him from the city.

Clambering in the dark up bare rugged heights, they reached at last a cavern on a lofty peak, a league distant from the city.

The Coreish, finding that Mahomet had escaped, scoured the country for him, thirsting for his blood.

As the morning light crept through a crevice into the cavern, Abu Bekr, beholding it, said, trembling:

“Suppose they should look through the crack and see us here at their very feet! We are but two!”

“Nay, think not thus,” replied Mahomet. “We are but two, but God is in the midst, a third.”

The Coreish, armed with swords, came even to

the mouth of the cavern. A spider had spun its web across the opening, and a pigeon perched close by. The Coreish, looking, said, "Spiders' webs are over it as old as Mahomet himself," and they went their way.

Three days they remained in the cavern, receiving for their food milk from a flock of goats which was driven by the cavern by a servant in Abu Bekr's employ.

When the Coreish had abandoned their search as hopeless, Mahomet and Abu Bekr crept forth from their hiding-place and made their way to a place where two swift camels and a guide awaited them. Then, without being discovered or molested, they proceeded to Medina, where they were welcomed most joyfully.

The year of the flight of Mahomet from Mecca is taken by all Mohammedans as the date from which they reckon time.

V

A DAY OF TRIUMPH

Eight years passed by. Mahomet had become not only the Prophet of Medina but her ruler as

well. Many of the tribes in the vicinity of Medina had put away their idol worship and had given him their allegiance. The wisdom of his rule and the rich rewards which he gave to those who declared for Islam, as the new faith was called, caused his fame to spread throughout Arabia as a great and generous Prince. The time had come when at his call ten thousand men would flock to his standard and would willingly risk their lives in battle to advance the faith.

They knew that if they escaped death, they would grow rich from the plunder of their enemies. If they died, they anticipated the joys of Paradise, for Mahomet taught that the surest way to win Paradise was to die fighting those who refused to adopt the true faith. The Paradise he pictured was one to tempt the thirsty Arabs. There the true Believers would rest on soft couches in the cool shade of green gardens, watered by murmuring streams. Clad in green flowered silk and decked with gold and silver ornaments, they would drink fragrant wine or sparkling water from silver goblets handed to them by beautiful black-eyed maidens or would taste the delicious fruits hanging close at hand in tempting clusters.

At last Mahomet felt strong enough to realize the dream of his life. Now he could conquer the city that had despised and rejected him: he could force Mecca to acknowledge him her Prophet and Chief.

He summoned all Believers to join him at Medina, prepared for war. But he gave no hint of the expedition he had in mind. Indeed, he was so anxious to surprise Mecca that he did not confide his purpose even to Abu Bekr, his dearest friend. Daily he prayed in the mosque which had been built in Medina for a place of worship:

“O Lord! Let not any spy carry tidings to the Coreish. Blind their eyes and take away their sight until I come suddenly upon them and take them unawares.”

Only at the last moment did he announce his project, and then with strict commands to keep any word from reaching Mecca. Within a day's march of Mecca, Mahomet ordered that at night every one should build a fire on the heights so that the citizens of Mecca, beholding, should be struck with terror at the size of the advancing

army which threatened them, and should know resistance to be useless.

It happened as he planned. For when the Meccans beheld ten thousand fires blazing on the mountains, their hearts quailed within them.

Then Abu Sofian, the greatest chief in the city, one who had always been an unyielding opponent of Mahomet, went forth from Mecca to the camp of the Prophet. Mahomet, hearing of his arrival, said to his uncle, Abbas, "Take him to thy tent, and bring him hither in the morning."

When morning was come, Abbas brought Abu Sofian to the tent of Mahomet.

Mahomet, seeing him, exclaimed, "O Abu Sofian, hast thou not yet learned that there is no God save God alone?"

"Noble Sire," answered his guest, "had there been any God besides, truly He would have been of some help to me."

"And dost thou not acknowledge that I am the Prophet of the Lord?" pursued Mahomet.

"Noble Sire! As to this there is still some doubt in my heart."

"Woe to thee!" broke in Abbas. "This is no

time for hesitancy! Believe and testify forthwith the creed of Islam or else thy neck shall be in danger."

Forthwith Abu Sofian confessed, "Mahomet is the Prophet of God."

Thus at last, Mahomet saw his great enemy at his feet, a suppliant. Yet showed he no exultation.

"Haste thee to Mecca," he said, "and whosoever to-day shall take refuge in thy house or in the Kaaba, and whosoever closeth the door of his house, shall be in safety."

Abu Sofian hastened to leave the camp. But before he could leave, the armed forces had already been drawn up into companies, each company bearing a white banner presented to it by Mahomet. Abu Sofian was filled with amazement, as he recognized the various tribes.

"And what is that black mass with dark mail and shining lances?" he asked.

"That," replied Abbas, "is the favored band which guards the person of the Prophet."

"Verily," exclaimed the astonished chief, "this kingdom of thy nephew is a mighty kingdom."

“Nay, Abu Sofian! He is more than a King, he is a mighty Prophet.”

“Yea, thou sayest truly! Now let me go.”

“Away then,” assented Abbas, “and speed thee to thy people.”

Abu Sofian hastened back to Mecca, and as he entered the city he shouted at the top of his voice:

“Mahomet is close at hand! He hath a mighty army too great for us to withstand. Whoever entereth the house of Abu Sofian, whoever entereth the Holy House, whoever closeth his door upon himself, shall be saved this day.”

Hearing this shout, the people fled to their homes or to the Kaaba.

Meanwhile the advancing army of Mahomet came into full view of the city. As he saw that no army came forth to oppose his advance, the Prophet bowed low on his camel and gave thanks to God for delivering the city into his hands.

His troops he divided into four parts so that they might simultaneously enter the city at four different points. To them all Mahomet gave strict orders, “Offer violence to nobody, and fight not, except it be in the last extremity.”

For it was his noble wish to have his conquest of the city which had cast him forth unmarred by any bloodshed.

When his troops were advancing into Mecca, Mahomet caused his leather tent to be pitched in the open space north of the city. The great banner was planted at the door of his tent, and he retired within to rest awhile.

When he came forth clad in a yellow mantle, with a black turban upon his head, he was a striking figure indeed as he stood overlooking the city. His coal-black eyes gleamed beneath his noble brow. The locks which appeared beneath his turban were still jet black and slightly curling, but in his long bushy beard many white hairs now had appeared.

He mounted his favorite camel and, proceeding into the city, went straightway to the Kaaba.

Reverently he saluted the Sacred Stone; seven times he made the circuit of the temple, and then, striking the great idol Hobal with his staff, he ordered it cut down and destroyed.

“Truth hath come and falsehood gone,” he cried as the image fell with a crash; “for verily falsehood vanisheth away.”

In like manner, as he pointed at each in turn, the three hundred idols which surrounded the Kaaba were hewn down and destroyed. It remained only to obliterate the pictures painted on the walls of the Kaaba, and to send a crier through the city with the proclamation: "Whoever believeth in God let him not leave in his house any



FORTHWITH THE NEGRO MOUNTED TO THE
ROOF OF THE KAABA.

image whatsoever that he doth not break in pieces."

When this had been done, Mahomet commanded Bilâh, the slave whom Abu Bekr had rescued from torture years before, to sound the call for prayer, even as Bilâh had been

wont to do it in Medina. Forthwith the negro, tall, dark, and gaunt, mounted to the roof of the

Kaaba, and with his powerful vibrant voice gave the call which to this day summons the Faithful to prayer.

“Great is the Lord! Great is the Lord! I bear witness that there is no God but the Lord. I bear witness that Mahomet is the Prophet of God. Come unto Prayer. Come unto Salvation. God is Great! God is Great! There is no God but the Lord.”

The multitude, ranging themselves in rows about the Kaaba, worshipped God with prayers and prostrations after the ritual Mahomet had given them.

Despite the destruction of their idols, the people of Mecca were won to Mahomet by his mercy and generosity and by his expressions of ardent love for his native city.

“Thou art the choicest spot on the earth unto me,” he said, “and the most delectable. If thy people had not cast me forth, I never had forsaken thee!”

The citizens of Medina feared that having conquered his native city, Mahomet would not return to Medina, and they were greatly troubled.

But Mahomet, hearing of their distress, reassured them, saying:

“God forbid that I should ever leave you! I came to Medina a fugitive, and ye gave me a place of refuge; an outcast, and ye took me in; despised, and ye cherished me. If all the rest of mankind should go one way, and the men of Medina another, verily I should go with the men of Medina. Where ye live I will live, and there also will I die.”

— “The Life of Mahomet” (from original sources) by
Sir WILLIAM MUIR, K.C.S.I.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

I

PRINCE ALEXANDER MAKES A CONQUEST

THERE came to Philip, King of Macedon and Lord of Greece, a certain man of Thessaly offering a fine horse for sale to the King. He asked so large a price for the horse that Philip's curiosity was aroused, and he said, "Tomorrow I will see the horse and judge for myself whether he is worth the price you ask."

At the appointed time, Philip and his court went forth to a meadow to make trial of the horse. With them went Alexander, the King's young son.

All cried out in admiration when they saw the magnificent black horse that awaited them. He was of unusual size, and had a white spot on his forehead in shape like the brow of an ox. From this, as some say, came his name, Bucephalus, which means Ox-head.

“Splendid!” “What a noble animal!” cried the royal party, but their exclamations of delight died away when they saw the utter wildness and apparent viciousness of the horse. Not only could no one mount him, but even if his grooms so much as spoke to him, he would rush upon them fiercely.

“Out upon you for bringing before me such a savage monster!” cried Philip to the Thessalian. “Take the wild beast away!”

Alexander, meanwhile, had been watching the horse intently. The thrill of admiration he had felt on first beholding the beauty of the animal and on observing his mettle had become a passionate desire to call him his own. Judge then his dismay when he heard his father giving orders to lead the horse away!

“What a horse they are losing,” he exclaimed, “simply for want of enough power and skill to manage him!”

At first Philip paid no heed to the remarks. But as Alexander with flushed cheeks and stormy brow strode up and down, many times repeating his words, Philip rebuked him.

“Young man,” said he, “you find fault with your elders as if you knew more than they! Perhaps you think that you could manage the horse better than they.”

“Indeed I could,” replied the prince.

“If you try to ride him and fail,” asked his father, “what forfeit will you pay?”

“I will pay the price of the horse.”

At this all present laughed.

Then Alexander ran to Bucephalus, and taking hold of the bridle, turned him toward the sun, for he had noticed that Bucephalus was afraid of his shadow which fell before him and moved as he moved. Stroking the horse gently, Alexander talked to him. Gradually the fury of the beast subsided. Then, quietly letting his mantle fall, the prince leaped lightly to the horse’s back, and took his seat firmly.

Never before had Bucephalus been thus insulted. There was a moment of quivering astonishment. Then the great beast gathered himself together and sprang lightly into the air. But when he landed on his feet, there was still the unaccustomed burden on his back. He bucked

and turned; he stood on his hind legs; he stood on his fore legs; he tried his best to shake himself free. Still the slight young figure clung to his



THEN ALEXANDER RAN TO BUCEPHALUS, AND TAKING THE
BRIDLE, TURNED HIM TOWARD THE SUN.

back, and still, without using whip or spur, Alexander simply talked to him. Finding all his efforts to unseat his rider without avail, Bucephalus gradually grew quieter. Then, perceiving that now the horse desired only to run,

the Prince set off at a full gallop, urging him on with voice and spur.

King Philip and those about him watched in breathless silence. A winding of the meadow took horse and rider out of their sight. Would they ever see the Prince again? How could the King have been so mad as to allow his son thus to court death? A few moments of suspense, and, behold, Alexander was returning! The horse, obeying the boy's touch, came straight back to them. Then all save the King burst into applause. Philip, weeping, embraced his son, saying, "My son, seek some other kingdom to rule; Macedonia is too small for thee."

Thus the Prince tamed and won the horse Bucephalus. Yet though in Alexander the spirited creature had found a master, no other man was ever able to mount him. Until the day that the great horse died in far distant India, it was ever upon his back that Alexander was wont to lead the charge in battle. The proud, fearless spirit which animated each of them so united them in understanding, sympathy, and affection that wherever the name of Alexander is known, men remember Bucephalus.

II

ALEXANDER SEEKS NEW KINGDOMS

When Alexander was only twenty years of age, the death of his father brought him to the throne of Macedon. Quickly settling the affairs of Greece, the young King led his army forth into Asia, to add to his realm by conquest. He dared to believe that he could compel the millions who bowed the knee to the Great King of Persia to acknowledge him their lord and master. The vast hoards of silver and of gold which the Persian monarchs had been collecting for centuries he would make his booty.

At Issus he met and defeated the great army of Darius, King of the Persians. Darius fled from the battle-field, but his mother, wife, and daughters were all taken captive. Alexander treated them with the greatest consideration. They were allowed all the luxuries to which they had been accustomed and were served with the pomp and splendor due a royal family in prosperity.

During the next two years Alexander added Phœnicia, Syria, and Egypt to his kingdom.

While he was thus engaged, messengers came to him bearing a letter from Darius, offering to pay ten thousand talents as a ransom for the prisoners and to cede to Alexander all the countries on that side of the Euphrates, as well as to give him his daughter in marriage, if he would agree to make peace.

When Alexander told his friends of the offer of Darius, Parmenio, one of his generals, said :

“If I were Alexander, I would accept.”

“So would I, if I were Parmenio,” retorted Alexander.

To Darius he wrote, “If you will come to me, you shall be treated like a king, but you must come to me as to the Lord of all Asia, and not as to an equal. And if you dispute my right to the possession of your realms, stay and try the event of another battle, but hope not any more to secure yourself by flight, for wherever you fly, thither I will surely pursue you.”

Seeing that there was no other way but to fight, Darius collected a vast army of more than a million men and awaited the coming of the conqueror. He chose for a battle-field a great

plain near Arbela. This was levelled so that both his chariots, from which extended sharp scythes, and the vast numbers of his army could be most effective.'

At once Alexander crossed the Tigris and marched to meet the Persian King.

Hillocks hid the enemy from their view, however, until the Macedonians were only four miles distant. Here Alexander, having halted his army, gave orders for the fortification of the camp. The rest of the day he spent riding about the region, observing the enemy's arrangement of troops and learning the nature of the ground.

Returning to the camp, he called his officers together and spoke to them thus :

"This battle is not for Syria — Phœnicia, or Egypt, but for all Asia. Remind the men you command how great is the reward at stake! See to it that they keep in their ranks; that they march silently, but when the war shout is to be raised, let it be loud and fearful. And know well that the issue of the battle depends upon how each man performs his duty." Then, having posted guards, the Macedonians went to rest.

Darius, meanwhile, by torchlight was inspecting his troops drawn up in battle array, fully armed.

The oldest friends of Alexander, as they saw the plain covered by the vast host, and the flashing of myriad torches, and heard the uproar in the enemy's camp like the roaring of a tempestuous sea, were fearful. Parmenio came to Alexander and urged him to attack the Persians by night,



DARIUS WAS INSPECTING HIS TROOPS.

thinking to reap advantage from the confusion in the darkness. But Alexander answered : "I will not steal a victory."

Having offered sacrifices to the gods, Alexander, too, retired to his tent to sleep. It is said that he slept that night better than usual. Indeed he

was still sleeping when his officers came to attend him the next morning, and they were obliged themselves to issue orders to the army to take their morning meal.

Then Parmenio went into the King's apartment and called him two or three times by name. When he awoke, Parmenio asked him: "Why do you sleep as if you had already conquered, rather than as one having to fight to-day the greatest battle the world ever heard of?"

Alexander smiled. "Is it not as good as a victory," he asked, "to have overtaken the enemy?"

The army of Darius meanwhile had stood under arms all night, for they feared a night attack. Thus the morning found them wearied, with loss of rest and with the fear that had been growing in their hearts all night.

In the van of the army Darius had stationed his scythe-bearing chariots, for upon them he depended to cut down the Macedonian phalanx.

When Darius gave orders for the chariots to advance, they were met by showers of Grecian darts and arrows, which slew many of the horses

and drivers before the phalanx was reached. Then as Alexander had ordered, the Macedonian ranks opened and the chariots ran straight through the army, without inflicting harm.

When Darius saw the chariots thus made worthless and beheld Alexander pressing furiously forward, the King felt overwhelming fear clutch his heart; turning, he was the first to flee from the field. His generals followed.

Left without a king to fight for or a general to command them, the great host was seized by panic and soon the battle had become a rout. Yet there was much hard fighting done, especially on the wings, where tidings did not at once arrive of the flight of Darius. Indeed the Persians on the right wing pressed Parmenio so hard that he sent to Alexander for reënforcements. Alexander, then engaged in the pursuit of Darius, received Parmenio's message and immediately turned about to go to his relief. Before reaching him, however, he learned that Parmenio was already victorious, and that in that quarter also the enemy had been put to flight.

Meanwhile, thousands of the Persians were

slain, both on the battle-field and in the pursuit, but Darius, hidden by the thick dust, eluded capture.

Alexander was now acknowledged lord of Asia. Babylon, Susa, and Persepolis, where were the royal treasures, heaps of gold and silver, untold wealth of precious stones and royal robes, were at his disposal. These riches he bestowed freely upon his friends, and upon all who had distinguished themselves by deeds of valor.

Having occupied these cities, Alexander continued the pursuit of Darius, over mountains and through deserts, until at last he was close upon the royal fugitive.

When finally he came up with the King, it was to find him forsaken, lying dead in his chariot, pierced with many darts by the hands of his own kin.

Alexander reverently covered the dead body with his own robe and sentenced the King's murderers to a terrible death. The body of Darius, having been embalmed, was buried with royal honors in the royal tomb at Persepolis. The children of the dead King were given a princely

education and ample revenues, and the brother of Darius was admitted into the number of Alexander's friends.

To bind all parts of his empire together, Alexander founded many cities in Asia and in Egypt, in each of which at least a part of the people were Greeks. Thus knowledge of the Greek language and customs was spread. Further, he chose thirty thousand Asiatic boys and girls and gave them masters to instruct them in Greek literature and to train them to fight in the Macedonian manner. To please the Asiatics, he adopted the dress of the Persians and many of their manners, encouraging his officers to do the same. Alexander himself took the beautiful Roxana, the daughter of one of the kings he had conquered, to be his wife. Many other Macedonians also married Asiatic women. To please his subjects in Macedon and in Greece, he sent home a large share of the booty which he had taken in the war. Thus Alexander sought to please all his subjects and to unite them in feelings and in customs.

III

ALEXANDER MEETS A DANGER THAT EQUALS HIS
COURAGE

Alexander came to the Hydaspes River in India and encamped on its banks. Since it was the rainy season, the river was turbid and swollen.

On the opposite bank, Porus, king of the country beyond the river, was seen waiting, with all his army and his elephants, to prevent Alexander from crossing into his kingdom. While Porus himself remained with the main body of his troops directly opposite where he saw Alexander's camp, the Indian King sent detachments of his men to guard all the fords of the stream.

Alexander saw that it would be impossible for him to cross where Porus was awaiting him. The Indian army, splendidly equipped for battle, stood ready to attack his soldiers the moment they landed. Porus had a very great number of elephants trained to war stationed on the bank, facing the river. Alexander knew that his horses would be terrified by the appearance and the trumpeting of the elephants and would refuse to

mount the bank. Indeed, he feared that even before they reached the shore, the horses, seeing the elephants in the distance, would become frantic and leap from the rafts into the water.

Alexander saw that he must devise some way to steal a passage across the river.

Accordingly, night after night he led out his cavalry along the bank in different directions commanding troopers to raise the war shout, as if they were actually preparing to attempt the passage, and Porus marched along the opposite bank each night with his elephants in the direction of the noise, ready to oppose the crossing.

When this had been done many times and nothing had come of it, Porus ceased to fear Alexander's nightly performances, and no longer sallied forth with his elephants to follow the movements of the Macedonian cavalry, though he still kept spies posted at various points along the bank.

Several miles from Alexander's camp, at a point where the river curved, there was a bluff, densely covered with trees. Directly facing this bluff, an island, also thickly wooded, lay in the river.

Here, under cover of the trees, Alexander decided to ferry the main part of his army across.

On the night that he chose to carry out his stratagem, he gave orders that there should be the accustomed tumult of voices and of arms, and the flashing of torches. One body of troops he sent in the usual open manner to take position on the bank halfway between the bluff and the camp. Another detachment was to remain in the camp under Craterus. To him Alexander gave the order, "Remain here as long as Porus remains opposite with his army and elephants. If, however, he draws off his elephants and marches against me, leaving only a part of his army, then do you cross the river with all possible speed."

Then Alexander with picked troops, about six thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry, marched secretly to the bluff, keeping well inland so that they could not be detected.

There they stuffed with straw and stitched securely the skins with which they had been provided for making the rafts for the transportation of the horses. There, too, they fastened

together the boats, which had been carried to the spot in sections.

During the night a violent tempest broke upon them. Such was the roaring of the thunder and of the heavy rain, that the sounds of their preparations, the clashing of arms, and the shouting of orders were drowned in the mightier voices of the storm.

Toward daybreak the storm abated, and then, as silently as possible, horses and men embarked. They had passed the island and were close to the opposite bank before any suspicion of their coming reached the Indian sentinels. These, on beholding the boats approaching, put spurs to their horses and galloped off to carry the tidings to Porus.

Steering to the bank, the troops disembarked, Alexander being the first to step on shore. Then they discovered that what they had supposed to be the mainland was really another island, and that between themselves and the mainland flowed a torrent, swollen by the rain.

Into this, all armed, they marched. Such was the depth of the water that it reached even above the breasts of the foot-soldiers, and the horses

could keep but their heads above water. The ground was very slippery, and the current swift. Yet men and horses followed Alexander in safety to the mainland.

Scarcely had they made the land and formed into line, when the son of Porus appeared with two thousand men and many war chariots. Alexander easily put them to flight with a detachment of his cavalry. The son of Porus was slain with four hundred of his horsemen, and the chariots, stuck fast in the mud, were captured, horses and all.

Now Porus himself came forth with all his strength.

He chose his position with care, drawing up his army on level and firm ground. His elephants he placed in the front line at regular intervals of about one hundred feet. The spaces between them were filled with his finest foot-soldiers, the advance guard of these men being a few feet in the rear of the elephants. His cavalry he placed on the wings.

This arrangement gave his army from a distance the appearance of a fortified city, the elephants

seeming to be projecting towers, and the compact lines of foot-soldiers the walls between. Porus himself, a man of gigantic size, was mounted upon the largest elephant.

Alexander, when he came in sight of the Indian army thus drawn up for battle, halted his men and gave them time to rest and to get their breath. After studying carefully the arrangement of the opposing force, he remarked to those near him: "At last I see a danger that matches my courage. For the battle to-day is to be waged at the same time with wild beasts and with men of uncommon valor."

Alexander feared lest, if he should advance against the centre, the elephants might work the very mischief Porus had hoped for, both in terrifying his horses and in trampling down his men. For this reason he decided to attack the cavalry on the enemy's left wing with a body of his own fine horse.

He ordered the Macedonian phalanx not to advance until by his cavalry charge he had thrown both the enemy's cavalry and infantry into confusion.

All being ready, Alexander, mounted upon Bucephalus, led the charge.

A heavy storm of arrows, followed by furious charges of cavalry, disordered the Indian cavalry. Then, while they were attempting to rally, Cœnus attacked them from the rear as Alexander had commanded. This double charge the enemy's cavalry could not withstand. Breaking their ranks, they fled to the elephants "as to a friendly wall."

Upon this, Porus ordered the elephants forward. They were met at once by the compact ranks of the Macedonian phalanx who let fly a shower of darts, and stabbed them with their long spears. Nevertheless the elephants charged furiously, and even the close ranks of the phalanx were mowed down under the feet of the furious beasts.

To the Macedonians it was a new method of fighting. Yet those who escaped the elephants' charge bravely followed them, as they retreated, with a fresh volley of darts.

Meanwhile the Indian cavalry had rallied and had attacked Alexander's cavalry. But they were again forced to flee to the elephants for protection.

Thus cooped up in a small place, they were easily cut down. The elephants did more damage to their own side than to the Macedonians, who, having a wide space to move about in, quickly learned to give way when the elephants charged. Then as the beasts retreated they followed them and galled them with showers of weapons. At length the elephants became frantic; many of them, being now without drivers, trampled down the Indians, both men and horses.

At last, crazed by their wounds, and for the most part riderless, the elephants retreated from the battle, their faces to the enemy, "like so many ships backing water," trumpeting as they went.

Then Alexander ordered his cavalry to surround the Indian army, and his infantry to advance with locked shields, to give an irresistible force to their attack. Thus at the mercy of their foe, the Indians were hewn down, except such few as were able to escape through some gap in the cordon of Alexander's cavalry.

Unlike Darius, Porus refused to flee as long as any part of his army offered resistance. Such was his great strength that the javelins he hurled

seemed to fly with as much force as if they had been thrown by a catapult. But if he inflicted wounds and death upon many, his imposing stature made him the target for countless weapons. Despite his strong armor he had received many wounds, and at length he grew faint from loss of blood. Then the darts seemed to fall from his hands rather than to be thrown. The huge elephant he rode defended him with the greatest courage as long as his master could fight. Then perceiving him about to fall, the elephant knelt cautiously, and with his trunk gently drew every dart from the King's body.

Messenger after messenger came to Porus from Alexander, asking him to come to him, but Porus would not yield. At last came an Indian, an old-time friend, who had sometime before given his allegiance to Alexander. To him the brave King listened. Then having received water to relieve his faintness, he agreed to go to Alexander.

When Porus was brought before him, Alexander marvelled at the great stature of the man, for he was more than seven feet tall, and his breastplate was twice the width of that of an ordinary man.

But still more did Alexander marvel at the majestic bearing of his conquered foe. For though his army had been utterly defeated, Porus did not seem to be broken in spirit, but advanced to meet Alexander as one hero would meet another.

Then Alexander asked: "How do you wish to be treated?"

"Like a king, O Alexander," Porus replied.

Delighted with this answer, Alexander said: "But that I would do for my own sake. Have you nothing to request for yourself?"

"No," answered Porus. "In what I have asked all things are included."

Alexander, more than ever admiring him, immediately not only gave him back his own dominions to rule as Alexander's lieutenant, but also added to them another kingdom of even greater extent. From that day Porus ever remained loyal to Alexander.

Such then was the battle which Alexander fought against Porus and the Indians on the hither side of the Hydaspes. To commemorate the event he founded two cities, one on the battle-field, and the other at the point where he had

started to cross the river. The latter city he called Bucephalus, in honor of the gallant old horse which that very day had died, after having endured so many toils and hardships with his master. Alexander mourned him as a friend.

IV

ALEXANDER IS CONQUERED

The victory of the Macedonians over Porus had been at such cost to their own army that they were disheartened. No such doughty opposition had they hitherto encountered. Besides, they had left Macedon eight years before and were worn and weakened by the many hardships they had undergone. Now they had come into a country all unknown to them, and they were full of terror at perils lurking in these strange regions on the outskirts of the world. Besides, longings for home and dear ones were strong upon them and they had no appetite for further conquest. To add to their depression, drenching rains fell daily, with incessant thunder and lightning.

Alexander's ambitions, on the other hand, only

waxed greater as the limits of his empire were extended. So long as there was any people left on earth unconquered, so long he wished to continue his conquests. The rumors of dangers ahead greater than any he had yet encountered simply whetted his desire to go forward. Besides, there was united with his ambition for a world-wide empire the never satisfied thirst for knowledge. He wished to explore the mysteries of the unknown countries which lay beyond and to arrive at last at the sea which encircled the world and to learn its nature.

But he observed the sullen looks of his soldiers and divined that their thoughts and longings were far different from his.

Accordingly, having called together his friends and the officers of the army, he spoke to them as follows:

“Seeing that you, O Macedonians, no longer follow me into dangers with your usual enthusiasm, I have called you together so that I may either persuade you to go farther or be persuaded by you to turn back.

“If we have already conquered all the nations

we have met, why should we hesitate to go on and add the nations beyond to our conquests? It is now but a short distance to the sea. Our



HE OBSERVED THE SULLEN LOOKS OF HIS SOLDIERS.

fleet shall pass from the Persian Gulf to the Pillars of Hercules, and all Libya and all Asia as well shall be ours, and the gods will make one the boundaries of our empire and of the world.

“On the other hand, if we now return, the unconquered peoples will incite to rebellion those

we have conquered, and all our labors will be lost.

“Wherefore, dear friends and countrymen, let us go on ! A life spent in valiant deeds is pleasant, and so is death also, when we leave behind us an immortal name. If I, your general, had ever shrunk from sharing with you the toils and hardships to which you have been exposed, then might your hearts fail you. But our labors have been ever in common. And as the dangers have been equal, so have been the rewards. All the land we have subdued is yours and you are its rulers. And when all Asia is subdued, then, by the gods, I will not only satisfy each man’s utmost desires, but far exceed them, and you may then go home objects of envy to all men.”

After Alexander had spoken thus, a long silence followed and the men kept their eyes fixed upon the ground. All feared to speak in opposition to Alexander, yet no one was willing to assent to what he proposed. Again and again Alexander urged them to speak, even if their opinions differed from his.

At last Cœnus, one of the oldest generals, who

had served in Philip's campaigns as well as in all of Alexander's, summoned his courage, rose, and spoke in behalf of the army.

"The more I consider, O King," said he, "the number and the greatness of the exploits we have performed under your command since we set out from home, the more does it seem to me best to set some limit to our toils and dangers. You see yourself how few of us are left of those who started out with you. And these few have no longer the same strength of body, and they are disheartened. Then, too, all who have parents living yearn to see them. They yearn to see their wives and children — they yearn to see the soil of their native land.

"If then, O King, you lead them on against their wishes, you will not find them the same men in the face of danger, for they will fight without heart.

"But do you, if it agrees with your wishes, return home with us; see your mother once again; and settle the affairs of Greece and Macedon. Then, if you wish to form a new expedition against any people, other Macedonians

will follow you, young men full of vigor instead of old men worn out with toil.

“Moderation in the midst of success is the noblest of virtues, O King!”

When Cœnus had ended his address, those present showed their approval, some by loud applause, some by silent tears streaming from their eyes.

Alexander, angry at the freedom with which Cœnus had spoken and the approval given him by the other officers, dismissed the meeting. The next day, while his wrath was still hot, he again called together the same men and told them that he himself would go on, but that he would not force any of the Macedonians to accompany him against their wishes.

“Those of you who wish,” said he, “are free to go home, and when you arrive there, you may tell your friends that you have returned, leaving your King in the midst of his enemies.”

With these words he left them and retired to his tent. Nor would he allow any of his friends to come near him that day or the next, for he waited, thinking that the mood of the soldiers

would change. When on the third day there was still a deep sullen silence throughout the camp, it was evident to Alexander that instead of having their minds changed by his wrath the men were angered by it.

Then Alexander ordered sacrifices to be made; and when the soothsayers announced that the omens in sacrificing were against his going on, Alexander announced to the army that he had resolved to march back.

Then the soldiers shouted and wept for joy. Thronging about him, they blessed Alexander, because by them and by them alone, he allowed himself to be conquered.

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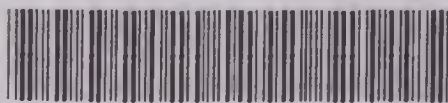
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